

Kashmiri marchers halted, says official

ISLAMABAD (R) — Pakistani authorities said on Tuesday they had halted a march by thousands of Kashmiris to cross an Indian-defended ceasefire line in their disputed state. Pakistan-ruled Azad (free) Kashmir's Prime Minister Sardar Abdul Qayyum, quoted by the state-run radio Pakistan, said the marchers were halted at the town Chinari near the border. He said about 15,000 people had reached Chinari to cross the control line "but they were stopped from proceeding further." There was an immediate word if the militants, who had earlier begun the march from the state capital of Muzaffarabad in defiance of a government ban, had clashed with police or army, which is responsible for keeping the peace near the border. But Mr. Qayyum said the militants clashed with police at two other border points in another district. Some people were injured in the "police action" at Madarpur, he said. A foreign ministry spokesman in Islamabad said the government was fully determined to enforce its decision to prevent the marchers from "reaching and crossing the line of control."

Jordan Times

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Sudan official leaves Egypt, hopes for better ties

CAIRO (R) — Sudan's second in command left Cairo on Tuesday after tough questioning by Egyptian leaders on his government's links with extremist Muslims. Major-General Al Zubeir Muhammad Salah, described as a "fundamentalist" by Egyptian officials, had been in Egypt for 18 months, as very frank talks between the two neighbours ended what he called the recent coldness in relations. "There are no differences in point of views but rather suspicions," Gen. Salah, deputy chairman of Sudan's ruling Revolutionary Command Council, told reporters at Cairo airport. Official sources said Mr. Mubarak told Mr. Salah on Monday his government should distance itself from Muslim fundamentalist groups, especially those led by the charismatic intellectual Hassan Tourabi. Egyptian officials believe Mr. Tourabi is the effective ruler of Sudan and is sponsoring Muslim extremist groups which could destabilise pro-Western countries such as Egypt.

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Dumas to visit Syria on Thursday

PARIS (R) — French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas will hold talks in Syria on Thursday, seven weeks after his visit was postponed in a diplomatic row over a wanted Nazi war criminal. Foreign ministry spokesman Daniel Bernard said Mr. Dumas would meet President Hafez Al Assad, Vice President Abdul Halim Khaddam and Foreign Minister Farouq Al Shara in Damascus. Mr. Dumas had been due to visit Syria on Dec. 19 and 20 but the trip was called off at the last minute after Mr. Assad made it known that he would not be available to meet him.

Egypt holds antiquities addressed to Saudi princess

CAIRO (R) — The authorities at Cairo airport have held up a shipment of antiquities and jewels addressed to a Saudi Arabian princess and valued at millions of dollars, customs officers said on Tuesday. Egyptian law severely restricts the export of antiquities and valuable purchases locally. The officers said experts from the antiquities department and Cairo museum were inspecting the shipment, which included ancient copper vases, to check the origin of the items.

Kuwait bans foreign poll observers

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait said on Tuesday it would not accept foreign observers to monitor its all-male parliamentary election scheduled for October. "It is out of the question to enlist the help of foreign observers to monitor national elections," Justice Minister Ghazi Obaid Al Sammar told the Kuwait news agency Kuna. "The Kuwaiti minister stressed the purely internal nature of this issue and expressed certainty that the honourable citizens are fully aware of the fairness of the judicial system," Kuna said.

U.S. congressmen protest Iranian stamp

WASHINGTON (AP) — A bipartisan group of 66 members of the House of Representatives has written Secretary of State James Baker to complain about an anti-Israel postage stamp issued by Iran. The stamp shows a child holding a stone through a sheet of glass inscribed with the words "The child of the child, 1991." That is an apparent reference to the United Nations holiday devoted to promoting the welfare of children. The lawmakers, led by Rep. Wayne Owens, asked Mr. Baker to "register a forceful protest" with Iran and to seek to limit the stamp's distribution because it violates international postal conventions.

Britain, Kuwait sign defence accord

LONDON (R) — Kuwait and Britain signed a defence accord on Tuesday which British firms hope will lead to new arms orders from the Gulf emirate. The memorandum of understanding was signed in London by their defence ministers, Kuwait's Sheikh Ali Sabah Al Salim Al Sabah and Britain's Tom King. The British defence ministry said the accord opened the way for detailed agreements on equipment sales, the supply of information to Kuwait by British military experts and combined training and exercises by their forces. Kuwait signed a similar agreement with the United States last year and plans one with France.

Habash's health is improving

TUNIS (R) — The health of Palestinian leader George Habash, whose medical treatment in France caused a political storm before he was taken back to Tunisia, is improving, a medical bulletin said on Tuesday. "There is no need for any concern over his state of health which is constantly improving," said Mr. Habash's personal physician, Mohammad Chihab Eddine.

Warm air, occasional sun coming

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Weather will gradually improve and the Kingdom is expected to be under the effect of a humid and relatively warm mass of air blowing from the Mediterranean, but no snow-

storms are forecast, the Meteorology Department said Tuesday.

Department Acting Director Rafiq Jamil Shaker said in a statement to the Jordan News Agency, Petra, that until Friday evening there would be a gradual rise in temperatures with a

chance of showers and partly cloudy skies broken at times by sunny conditions.

Frost and ice will continue to form in the desert and on high mountainous regions with the formation of fog in the wadis due to melting of snow, Mr. Shaker forecast.

He said that the relatively warm and humid weather will help melt the snow and the ice, adding that the temperatures were expected to reach seven degrees Wednesday.

Mr. Shaker reported that the total amount of rain water falling on Jordan was far higher than the annual average with the accumulated amount had reached 860 millimetres with the least rainfall registered at Al Jafer desert region in the southeast.

Frost and ice in the last two days caused numerous incidents and road accidents most of which were dealt with by the Civil Defence Department (CDD). The CDD said in a statement to Petra that its personnel dealt with 380 incidents in the past 24 hours up to noon Tuesday including the rescuing of 64 people besieged by snow at home or in their cars.

The incidents, according to Petra, included fires at home caused by heaters and broken bones due to falls on the icy road. Only one death was reported.

But Al Dustour daily Tuesday, quoted CDD Director General Afif Al Ghoul as saying that the stormy weather in the past two days caused the death of 24 people, including three cases of drowning.

The Armed Forces reported that its road clearing equipment had Tuesday completed the task of reopening the main roads. These included the University of



Unprepared for such harsh weather conditions, a driver kneels on the frosty road to change a flat tyre during the snowstorm that hit the country in the last three days (photo by Youssef Al 'Allan)

Israeli housing units in occupied territories far less than claimed

WASHINGTON (R) — U.S. Secretary of State James Baker has told the Israeli ambassador that Israel is building only 5,700 to 6,000 housing units in the occupied territories, far fewer than it claims, the Washington Post said on Tuesday.

The paper said Ambassador Zalman Shoval told Mr. Baker in talks last Friday that Israel had 13,000 housing units under way on the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

It said Mr. Baker based his estimate on U.S. intelligence information. There have been a wide range of unofficial estimates, from as low as 3,000 to well over 13,000.

Israel needs U.S. financial help to obtain \$10 billion on favourable terms from commercial banks to help resettle tens of thousands of Jews from the Soviet Union and Ethiopia.

The United States has suggested it is willing to accept completion of those units already under way in the occupied territories, but sees more building as an obstacle to peace in the Middle East.

The Post said Mr. Baker apparently did not make an explicit demand on the number of units the United States would go along with, but implied that Israel should accept a ceiling of 6,000 in Palestinian-populated areas.

Health Minister Ehud Olmert, a close ally of Prime Minister

Yitzhak Shamir and frequent spokesman for government policy, on Monday accused U.S. President George Bush of deliberately provoking a confrontation.

He said in Jerusalem that he no longer expected that Israel would receive the U.S. loan guarantees.

"I am not very optimistic on the chances to agree on the loan guarantees," Mr. Olmert told visiting Jewish Americans.

Mr. Olmert accused Washington of taking the side of Arab states over the occupied land. He said the dispute over loan guarantees was part of a strategy by Mr. Bush to force Israel to return all Arab land occupied in the 1967 Middle East war.

The United States has presented Israel with such tough conditions on its request for the loan guarantees that some Jewish leaders now believe a compromise deal may not be possible.

Mr. Baker Friday handed Mr. Shoval Washington's conditions for the loan guarantees.

"The United States has toughened its position and also indicated that there was little room for negotiation on its demands," said one source familiar with the meeting.

Mr. Baker demanded that Israel stop building new housing in Jewish settlements in occupied territories in the West Bank and

Gaza Strip. He also said the United States would deduct a dollar for every dollar Israel spent completing houses already under construction or building roads or other support facilities in the Jewish settlements.

"The deductibility would apply to all money spent in the territories, on public and private housing and on infrastructure," said the source.

Taken to its logical conclusion, that could mean any spending on roads or industry or even schools, sewage and health facilities in the settlements could exact its price in reduced American aid.

Mr. Baker, in a weekend television interview, also hinted that deductibility might be applied in the future to Israel's regular annual U.S. aid allowance of \$3 billion.

Asked if the United States was still conditioning settlements if it allowed Israel to complete the 9,000 housing units it has under construction in the territories, Mr. Baker replied:

"I don't think you are as if such an agreement were coupled with an understanding or a requirement that new construction activity would stop and anything that was completed would, in effect, have to be accounted for dollar for dollar from other assistance — or from assistance to Israel."

(Continued on page 5)

Saudi authorities crack down on militant Islamists

Special from Riyadh

SAUDI ARABIA'S ultra-conservative regime, caught between domestic and external pressure to liberalise the kingdom and internal calls for stricter adherence to Islamic principles, has cracked down on militant Islamic zealots. But the government has denied it has arrested opposition members.

An unnamed government spokesman told the Saudi press agency last week that concerning Western and Arab press reports "about detention and differences in opinion in Saudi Arabia, we reaffirm anew that all these are categorically unfounded."

But according to sources interviewed by the Jordan Times, the government did arrest hundreds of "religious police" in the capital after they marched to the palace of Prince Salman, governor of Riyadh, to protest being banned from the Al Shuleh shopping area. They were banned

by Prince Mishal, the owner of the centre, after "they simply got out of hand," said one Saudi businessman.

The government, increasingly embarrassed by Western complaints of harassment in the kingdom, which hosts nearly four million foreigners, moved to confiscate many trademark GMC trucks, which the religious police, known as mutawa, use to roam the streets in groups of five or six to enforce their brand of Islamic law.

According to several Saudi sources, prior to the march to Prince Salman's palace the demonstrators were warned that they would be arrested. There have been some unconfirmed reports that several protesters were killed when palace guards opened fire on the religious police.

According to one source, some of those arrested could be executed to send a clear message to dissidents in the kingdom. This could not be

confirmed by other sources.

"They simply were becoming too militant... they were on the rampage," said another Saudi businessman. "They went too far and the government cracked down on them."

The religious police, an anti-theism to Saudi Arabians seeking political and social liberalisation, had increased their militancy, especially in the downtown souks, shopping centres and schools, prior to their arrest.

Saudis and expatriates report harassment by the zealots to impose their brand of Islam, accusing women of prostitution because they wear perfume and aggressively harass veiled women.

"I was scared to leave my house because the mutawa would chase and sometimes threaten me," said a Saudi woman, who wears a veil, abaya and a face cover when she leaves her home. "They even harassed my 10-year-old daughter, who was totally covered, because her wrist was showing... this is not Islam."

Many expatriates in Riyadh say the situation has improved after the arrest but they still fear having too many cars parked outside their homes, an indication that their is a party inside and possibly an invitation for the mutawa to place them under surveillance or try to enter.

After the Gulf war, King Fahd moved to assuage the zealots by providing them with extra funding. Many rejected the presence of foreign troops on Saudi soil, the site of Islam's holiest shrines, but overall remained silent.

Other indications of the newly acquired boldness of dissidents were signed petitions challenging government policy. One petition, addressed to the head of the religious establishment in the kingdom, Sheikh Abdul Aziz Ibn Baz, challenges Saudi participation in the Middle East peace conference in Madrid last year as

Cabinet evaluates losses, approves compensation scheme

AMMAN (Petra) — The council of ministers Tuesday passed three important decisions designed to deal with the consequences of the snowstorms that hit Jordan in the past two months.

The cabinet requested the concerned ministers to speed up measures designed to repair damages affecting public utilities and the infrastructure. Questions related to funding the repair work should be coordinated with the minister of finance and the funds should be cut from allocations originally assigned to the concerned departments, a statement following the cabinet meeting said.

It said that steps are to be taken to ease the burdens on the people whose properties

and agricultural crops were severely damaged or flooded by the water or affected by the frosty weather. In this connection small farmers will have access to long term interest-free loans from the Agricultural Credit Corporation (ACC) and the Treasury — 25 per cent and 75 per cent respectively. Farmers will be given sufficient grace periods before paying back their dues.

Other farmers, the statement said, will get help from the ACC and the Treasury under regular terms provided that the loans be used for the purchase of equipment and other input required to replace those damaged by the weather conditions.

The statement said that needy people who sustained

property losses will also be compensated through the National Aid Fund.

The cabinet also decided to embark on measures designed to set up an agricultural insurance fund and to build more dams to collect water for the dry season.

The decisions were taken at a full cabinet session chaired by Prime Minister Sharif Zeid Ben Shaker during which a report by the special ministerial committee on the consequences of the snowstorms was reviewed. The report covered damages to roads, bridges, culverts, electricity, telephone, water and irrigation networks and other facilities, and public installations in addition to damages to agricultural crops.

Jordan road to Sweileh, the road leading to the King Hussein Medical Centre, the road to Tabarbour and the highway leading to Queen Alia International Airport. Other equipment, it said, were continuing the work on other areas within the city of Amman and in other governorates especially in Irbid, Mafrqa, Balqa, Karak and Maan where the snowstorm was harshest. At the Queen Alia International

Airport air traffic operations were Tuesday reported to be normal, but the Civil Aviation Authority said that slight amendments were made to Royal Jordanian (RJ) flights due to the delay in the arrival of the passengers at the airport.

In Karak, reports said that electricity supplies were disrupted during the snowstorm. A report by Petra Tuesday quoted Jordan Electricity Authority

(JEA) Director in Karak Hassan Thuneibat as saying that teams have now restored the supplies to all affected regions.

In view of the prevailing weather conditions several community colleges and private universities in Jordan declared that there would be no classes Tuesday and Wednesday.

The whole situation resulting from the weather conditions was (Continued on page 5)

8 policemen killed in Algeria; alleged culprits holding hostages

ALGIERS (Agencies) — Killers of two policemen took worshippers hostage in a mosque outside Algiers on Tuesday and defied security forces ringing the building, Algiers radio said.

The radio said the men, widely believed to be Muslim fundamentalists, took their hostages who were at prayer in Bordj Menaïel, some 80 kilometres east of the capital.

Eight policemen were killed in separate attacks in Algeria on Monday, only hours after Mohammed Boudiaf, head of the five-man presidency, imposed a national state of emergency after battles between security forces and Islamic militants.

"The murderers of the two policemen at Bordj Menaïel are cut off in the mosque where they took the faithful hostage at the start of the afternoon," the radio said.

Security forces launched a massive manhunt after the police were killed, six mown down by automatic weapons fire in two ambushes in Algiers, and two stabbed in Bordj Menaïel.

The Bordj Menaïel attackers were said to be accomplices of a man arrested in an operation to net Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) activists, blamed by authorities for widespread violence.

The FIS, now facing dissolu-

tion, challenges the legitimacy of the new rulers who took over after cancellation of a general election the party was set to win.

Monday's killings in Algiers, attributed to Afghan war veterans, were the first apparently deliberate ambush of police since the election was scrapped. FIS supporters demand Algeria's 25 million people live in an Islamic state under Sharia law, a message they spread from mosques until security forces moved in to enforce a ban on mosque politics.

Rioting erupted in a score of towns as mosque preachers were jailed. Mr. Boudiaf said some 50 people had been killed. Hospital, security and other sources said about 300 people were wounded.

Algerian fundamentalists who fought or trained with rebels in Afghanistan attacked security forces before the election last year. Defence Minister Khaled Nezzar said they were indirectly linked to the FIS.

"The state of emergency is to combat these people who seek to provoke disorder. The men of the FIS are not for dialogue. When I stretched out my hand, they sent only a threatening letter," Mr. Boudiaf told the nation.

Foreign diplomats in Algiers said that if the FIS was banned, its supporters could have no option but to go underground. The

independent newspaper El Watan said the FIS had "launched into terrorism" in reaction to the state of siege.

Algiers radio said continuing clashes had killed two more police on Monday at Dellys, 90 kilometres east of Algiers.

The cabinet met in crisis session on Monday under Prime Minister Sid Ahmad Ghazali to tackle the fast-changing upheaval.

The state of emergency, imposed for 12 months, gives the interior minister sweeping powers to order searches of homes, ban movement of people, close public places, order military trials and set up detention centres.

Mr. Ghazali said ministers were preparing a programme "to lighten the effects on the population of the general crisis the country is going through."

Some of the problems of daily life were to be seen in the Casbah on Tuesday. In the main Avenue Areski Bouzrina, where the police were killed, women staggered home with stocks of oil and spaghetti, newly arrived in the state market.

Officials from banks and nearby offices slipped out to stock up before the holy month of Ramadan, as youths sold black market cigarettes, peanuts, smuggled clothes and Chinese trinkets in the crowded narrow lanes.

Speaking late Monday on Algerian television, Mr. Boudiaf condemned the FIS for using mosques to incite young people to fight security forces.

"Unfortunately clashes occurred and blood was spilled. This is something nobody can accept," he said. "These young people who kill their brothers are being deluded. What is the difference between this soldier and this youngster?"

The FIS, in a communique, called on Algerians to reject the emergency measures announced Sunday, vowing that a national protest march would be held as planned Friday.

"Don't give up," the front exhorted followers in the statement Monday, urging them to claim their political rights. "Rest assured, the Islamic cause will emerge victorious whatever the sacrifices."

The communique was signed by information director Abdul Razak Rajam, whose arrest had been reported by state radio. It was not known whether he was in custody although most of the front's other leaders are in jail.

The call for defiance came on a day when calm was largely reported in the capital, Algiers. However, Monday's attacks on the police were the most deadly

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Libyan judge denies report on Lockerbie suspects

TUNIS (Agencies) — The Libyan judge investigating Western charges against two men indicted for the 1988 bombing of Pan Am flight 103 denied on Tuesday that they have disappeared or were dead, and said they were safe.

"That is not true. Those who say that could come to Libya and I will allow them to see the two men," Libyan judge Ahmad Al Zawi told Reuters by telephone from Libya.

The Washington Post, quoting intelligence sources, on Tuesday said the men, Abdul Basat Al Mohammad Al Meghrabi and Al Amin Khalifa Fhimah, were dead.

The paper said that Libya had been planning to announce the disappearance of the pair to suggest they had been kidnapped. "I can tell you that this is not true. The two men came to the (Tripoli) supreme court two days ago to be interrogated again by my aides," the Libyan judge

said. The United States and Britain have demanded that Libya agree to allow their extradition, but without success. A total of 270 people died when the Pan Am airliner blew up over Lockerbie.

U.S. Vice-President Dan Quayle said Washington was serious about forcing Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi to hand over the two Libyans.

"Qadhafi had better realise we are serious... you just have to look to the past to see that we have the political will to make these kinds of requests happen," Mr. Quayle said on British Broadcasting Corp. television on Monday night.

But asked if the United States might attempt to bomb the Libyan leader again, Mr. Quayle replied: "I am not saying what we will do, I am just saying we are serious and that he'd better understand we are serious."

(Continued on page 5)

Rescuers claw bodies from isolated mountain village

BEIRUT, Lebanon (AP) — Rescuers abandoned their immobilised bulldozers and clawed through eight metres of snow with spades and hands Tuesday to dig out the bodies of nine people killed by avalanches a week earlier.

More snow was expected to fall in Lebanon and neighbouring countries, which faced their worst winter in more than 40 years. Many schools remained closed in Lebanon, Syria and Jordan.

A thick layer of frost forced Lebanese civil defence workers to leave behind their bulldozers, which were skidding off roads onto snow-covered banks.

Rescuers backed by 30 Lebanese troops reached the village of Hizzir in the Bekaa Valley on foot and dug out nine bodies from snow-covered houses, the Civil Defence Department said in a statement.

The nine, found frozen to death in their homes, were among 14 people who have been reported dead for more than a week after the village was buried by several avalanches.

Officials said blizzards have killed 23 people in Lebanon since Feb. 1, and the independent newspaper An Nahar that "more victims will fall if the blizzards continue, given the primitive methods and equipment used in rescue operations."

The government said it sent medicine and heating fuel to the eastern Bekaa Valley using a roundabout route because the main road to Damascus was blocked by thick snowdrifts.

A Health Ministry statement

said the convoy, carrying 30 large boxes of medicine and other supplies, left Beirut for the Bekaa via Hums in northern Syria for the 300 kilometre drive.

In Syria, rescuers using bulldozers were trying to reach villages isolated for more than a week. Water pipes burst in Damascus as temperatures dropped well below freezing.

The traffic department reported 137 traffic accidents in the capital in the previous two days, with 24 people injured. Snow capped mosque domes and caked church steeples.

In Israel, farmers estimated crop damage from the snowstorms and rain that swept across the country this week would reach \$210 million, Israel radio reported.

Vegetable crops were extensively damaged along the Jordan Valley, where rising water spilled out over the banks of the Jordan River and flooded agricultural settlements.

The Sea of Galilee, Israel's main water reservoir, rose 13 centimetres Monday night even though the lake's exit dam has been completely opened.

As a result, water was flowing down the Jordan River into the Dead Sea for the first time in four years. But even with this winter's heavy precipitation, it was unlikely that the parched, sterile Dead Sea would be fully refilled.

In Jordan, the latest blizzard dumped as much as 2.5 metres of snow on parts of the Kingdom. The capital Amman received more than 60 centimetres in the



Rising water levels in the Jordan River caused water to flow into the Dead Sea for the first time in four years. Officials said 133 people were treated for broken bones or bruises as a result of icy conditions in the northern city of Zarqa alone.

Setback for hardliners in Iran's run-up to polls

NICOSIA (R) — Iran's Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei has ruled in a row over election laws against hardline opponents of President Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani.

Interior Minister Abdullah Nori said on Monday Khamenei had told him in a recent meeting that the 12-man Guardian Council should fully supervise parliamentary elections set for Apr. 10, the Iranian news agency IRNA reported.

Hardliners, fearful that the council might use its powers against them, had tried for months to limit its authority through amendments to election laws.

The 270-seat parliament or Majlis is the last stronghold of hardliners who have seen their power steadily eroded since the death of supreme leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini in 1989. Majlis Speaker Mehdi Karrubi said in December the hardline

combatant clergyman faction he heads might consider not taking part in the election if the council acted with bias.

"Based on the guidelines offered by the leader, everything in relation with the election procedure ... has been fully settled," IRNA quoted Nouri as saying.

The ruling means that the council — six Muslim clerics and six lawyers whose main job is vetting Majlis decisions — has the right to disqualify candidates or cancel votes in any constituency.

Khamenei, who backs Rafsanjani's loosening of state controls on the economy and moderate diplomacy, has urged all officials to try to hold a fair election free from factional fighting.

But a bitter contest has already started with speeches in mosques and universities and press interviews although candidates will not sign up before March 11. Officially the campaign will be just for a week from April 2.

Moderates say Rafsanjani's policies are the only hope for Iran's war-hit economy and Majlis should support him.

"Who will we vote for? For a Majlis at the service of the country's progress or, God forbid, for one which keeps throwing spanners in the government's works?" Alinaqi Khamoushi, head of Iran's Chamber of Commerce, Industries and Mines, said in a speech last month.

The law requires Rafsanjani to put his ministers to a vote of confidence before the new Majlis, which meets on May 28.

Hardliners say their opponents are plotting a purge.

"Some people feel they have a religious duty to run down their rivals by calumny but we must be alert and frustrate the enemy's plots," Deputy Majlis Speaker Assadollah Bayat, also a hardliner, said in a mosque speech last month.

Gulf war backlash sparked anti-semitic bias in Canada

OTTAWA (AP) — Harassment and vandalism aimed at Jews rose last year to its highest level in a decade due to backlash from the Gulf war, B'nai B'rith Canada officials said Monday.

"The Gulf war provided an emotional stimulus for those already predisposed to anti-semitism to join forces with Saddam Hussein and attack Jews while Scuds were landing in Tel Aviv," said Stephen Scheinberg, national chairman of the B'nai B'rith League for Human Rights.

He said more than 60 anti-semitic incidents occurred in the three weeks following the outbreak of the war in January 1991. The group also said volatile social, political and economic conditions in Canada and abroad served as catalysts for an increase in racist activity.

Its annual audit of anti-semitic incidents in Canada found 251 reported cases of harassment and vandalism last year, 19 per cent more than 1990 and a 42 per cent rise over 1989.

Harassment includes any incident of abuse for threat against an individual, group or institution including hate propaganda. Vandalism involves physical damage to property.

Iran, Armenia to resume ties

NICOSIA, Cyprus (AP) — Iran and Armenia agreed to establish diplomatic ties Monday, the Islamic Republic News Agency reported.

An Iranian foreign ministry statement said the two countries would open embassies within a month.

Armenia's foreign minister, Raffi Hovannisian, currently in Tehran at the head of a high-ranking delegation, met with his Iranian counterpart late Sunday.

Hovannisian called on Iran to mediate a dispute between Christian Armenia and its Muslim neighbour, Azerbaijan, IRNA reported.

It quoted Mr. Velayati as saying that Iran would "fulfill her responsibility in ending the conflict between the two neighbours, Armenia and Azerbaijan."

The two signed a letter of understanding to promote political, economic and cultural cooperation, IRNA reported in an earlier dispatch.

The agreement also calls for exports of Iranian natural gas to Armenia, plus other cooperation in oil and power-related projects, IRNA said.

Other agreements also signed in Tehran call for cooperation in transportation and production of non-ferrous metals, IRNA reported.

The historical dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan is over Nagorno-Karabakh, a mostly Armenian-populated enclave entirely inside Azerbaijan.

It is claimed by both countries and a 4-year-old battle for control has been one of the bloodiest in the former Soviet Union, resulting in hundreds of deaths.

Rastafarians ask to attend Ethiopian emperor's reburial

ADDIS ABABA (R) — Some 2,000 Rastafarians want to attend a reburial of Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie, who died mysteriously after the Marxist revolution that toppled him 18 years ago, royalists said on Monday.

The place where Haile Selassie was buried has never been officially disclosed. But Daniel Mengistu, a former general who heads the Ethiopian monarchist group Mo Anbassa, told Reuters the emperor's remains had been located in a secret spot.

Daniel said a Rastafarian group from the United States had arrived in the capital Addis Ababa to ask the government if they could attend the reburial set for July 23.

He said the Rastafarians — Christians who believe Haile Selassie was the son of God — want to hold a carnival of reggae music in the capital's main Makkal Square to mark the ceremony.

Rastafarians take their name from Ras Tafari, Haile Selassie's name as a young prince before he was crowned emperor in 1930. Legend claims he was Ethiopia's 225th monarch in an unbroken line since Menelik I, the son of the biblical King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba 3,000 years ago.

Several hundred black Rastafarians from around the world have already settled in Ethiopia, saying they want to be a vanguard for the return of people of African origin home to their continent.

The flurry of diplomatic activity has already produced results. Two weeks ago, border posts were opened in the towns of Gidjoul and Gaudan along the divide between the countries.

Turkmenistan was part of Persia before the territory was absorbed into the Russian empire in the 19th century.

When thousands of Iranians and Turkmen travelled to the border, they greeted relatives they had heard about but never seen.

"Opening the border posts was just a first step," says Ata Chariev, Turkmenistan's minister for foreign investment.

"For trade with Iran, it is necessary to open highways, the sea, cable and telephone communications ...," says Chariev.

Salman Rushdie's death sentence remembered

LONDON (R) — Supporters of British Author Salman Rushdie plan read-ins, speeches and rallies worldwide to mark his third anniversary under an Islamic death sentence next Friday.

Organisers said on Monday they would call on Iran to rescind a ruling by its late spiritual leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, that Rushdie must die for blaspheming Islam in his novel "The Satanic Verses."

Indian-born Rushdie, 44, in hiding under police guard since Feb. 14, 1989, when Khomeini ordered his death, may also hear of an accord to bring out the first English paperback edition of his controversial book.

A U.S. consortium of publishers was reported earlier this month to be considering publication of an English paperback edition in America and then in Europe, despite Muslim anger.

The New York-based authors' guild is expected to make a formal announcement on Friday. Carmel Bedford, spokeswoman for the International Committee for the Defence of Salman Rushdie, said thousands of writers, artists and others would join events on Friday in nations that include Britain, the United

States, Australia, France and Canada. But Rushdie is not expected to attend any of them.

"At last it is gathering momentum. I think people see that with the release of most of the hostages (held by pro-Iranian groups in Lebanon), they cannot understand what is keeping politicians quiet and why they have not moved on this fatwa (Islamic ruling), said Bedford.

Rushdie told an audience of publishers, broadcasters and journalists in December: "The Satanic Verses must be freely available and easily affordable, if only because if it is not read and studied, then these years will have no meaning."

But the U.K. action committee on Islamic affairs called for a continued worldwide campaign against "the notorious, filthy and profane book."

British shops of Penguin books, publishers of the hardback edition, were bombed after its publication in 1989 and talk of a paperback has fanned smouldering anger among British Muslims. Penguin handed back the English-language paperback rights to the author at his own



Salman Rushdie request in January. A spokesman said the firm would consider whether to join the U.S. consortium when it got details of the new paperback plan.

Iran exports goods, not fundamentalism, to Turkmenistan

By Geneive Abdo
Reuters

ASHKHAHAD, Turkmenistan — The green marble dome of the Agha Mosque glimmers even when fog and dust blur the outline of nearly every other building in this desert town.

Built by Ashkhabad's Muslims, the mosque is a symbol of Turkmenistan's re-entry into the Islamic World after decades of isolation.

"It has been a century-long dream of Turkmenistan to have a religion," says Mufi Khalilulla Gudazhiyev, before rushing off to evening prayers. "There are no obstacles to our religion now. We thought this day would never come."

Liberated from five decades of official atheism under Soviet rule,

Turkmenistan's orthodox Communist government passed a law in 1990 permitting freedom of religion.

Six mosques, all smaller than the Agha, have opened along Ashkhabad's dilapidated, muddy streets.

Men who once prayed secretly in their homes, gather at the mosques each night. In the afternoons, children attend Arabic lessons at new madrasahs, or Islamic institutes, after completing regular classes in state schools.

But the revival of a religion forced underground in the 1930s by Soviet leader Josef Stalin has not given this land of Sunni Muslims any grand illusions.

While the west ponders over whether the collapse of the Soviet Union will spur an explosion of

Iranian-style, Islamic fundamentalism among some 60 million people in the Muslim republics — Tajikistan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan and Uzbekistan — Turkmenistan's Muslims remain under the tight control of President Saparmurat Niyazov's government.

Some western analysts say Turkmenistan is most open to Iranian influence — even though most Iranians are Shiite Muslims while Turkmen belong to the rival Sunni sect — because it shares a border with Iran.

"Many people here don't even know what fundamentalism is," says Gudazhiyev, stroking his long mediaeval beard. Nor are they the least bit interested in fomenting a revolution that would replace Turkmenistan's president with a mufi.

"We have no plans to create an Islamic state. Even if a religious leader were allowed to run the republic, no one is prepared to do this. It would take half a century for a religious leader to become qualified to run the state."

Turkmenistan's atheist government is perhaps the most conservative among republics in the former Soviet Union.

Television and radio remain under strict state control, and an aggressive security force, known to trail foreign visitors, keeps close tabs on its 2.5 million citizens.

The decision in favour of religious tolerance had little to do with civil liberties it was motivated by a need to placate Islamic countries inclined to develop trade relations with Turkmenistan.

With the United States preoccupied with Russia and Ukraine, Turkmenistan and other Muslim republics have turned east to look for investments.

"We can't sit and wait for the West to wake up and decide we are worthy of their investments," Valery Otechetsov, Turkmenistan's trade minister, says in a hostile tone.

"We need new markets, and we can't get a penny from Europe. Our economic situation forces us to look to countries that are interested in our economy."

Turkmenistan has turned to Iran, its neighbour 25 kilometres to the south of Ashkhabad, for economic salvation.

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Velayati has made an official visit to Ashkhabad, Turkmen President Niyazov led a delega-

tion to Tehran in October. The flurry of diplomatic activity has already produced results. Two weeks ago, border posts were opened in the towns of Gidjoul and Gaudan along the divide between the countries.

Turkmenistan was part of Persia before the territory was absorbed into the Russian empire in the 19th century.

When thousands of Iranians and Turkmen travelled to the border, they greeted relatives they had heard about but never seen.

"Opening the border posts was just a first step," says Ata Chariev, Turkmenistan's minister for foreign investment.

"For trade with Iran, it is necessary to open highways, the sea, cable and telephone communications ...," says Chariev.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 73111-19

PROGRAMME TWO
18:00 Le Monde est a Vous
19:00 News in French
19:15 Inter-tropique
19:30 News in Hebrew
20:00 News in Arabic
20:30 Tech
21:10 Clinical And Manant
22:00 News in English
22:20 Prime Support

PRAYER TIMES

05:01 Fajr
06:19 Sunrise/Duha
11:50 Dhuhr
14:53 Asr
17:20 Maghreb
18:39 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church Swetleth, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church, Tel. 637783
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757
Teresian Church Tel. 623566

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 623541
Anglican Church Tel. 625383, Tel. 628543
Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 771331
Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 775261
St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751
Assrian International Church Tel. 685326
Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 811235
The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints Tel. 823824, 654932
Church of the Nazarene Tel. 675691

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology.

The country is currently affected by a west and relatively warm air mass, and a gradual rise in temperature is expected. Therefore the sky will be partly cloudy with chances for scattered rain. Winds will be westerly moderate.

Amman Min./Max. temp. 17/7
Aqaba 2/8
Deserts 2/15
Jordan Valley 7/17

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:
Dr. Bassim Qaddoumi 646024
Dr. Abdul Majed Shari 791405
Dr. Ahmad Suleihim 732118
Dr. Abdul Aziz Taboun 737708
First pharmacy 661912
Ferdous pharmacy 778336
Al Asena pharmacy 637055
Nairookh pharmacy 626762
Al Salam pharmacy 636720
Yaacub pharmacy 644945
Shmiciani pharmacy 637660

EBDO:
Dr. Ahmad Abu Baker (—)
Al Shara'a pharmacy (278625)

ZARQA:
Dr. Hisham Hiyasat (—)
Khalifeh pharmacy 985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111
Civil Defence Department 661111
Civil Defence Immediate 63041
Rescue 199
Rescue Police 92, 621111, 637777
Fire Brigade 891228
Blood Bank 775121
Highway Police 843402
Traffic Police 896390
Public Security Department 63031
Hotel Complaints 605800
Price Complaints 661176
Water and Sewerage 897467
Amman Municipality 787111
Complaints 787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121
Overseas Calls 010230
Central Amman Telephones 623101
Abdali Telephone Repair 661101
Jordan Television 773111
Radio Jordan 774111
Water Authority 680100

HOSPITALS

Jordan Electricity Authority \$15615
Electric Power 636381
Company 08-53200
RJ Flight Information 08-53200
Queen Alia Intl. Airport 08-53200

AMMAN:
Hussain Medical Centre 813813/32
Khalidi Maternity, J. Amn 642814/6
Akheh Maternity, J. Amn 64241/2
Jabal Amman Maternity 642362
Madha, J. Amman 636140
Palestine, Shmiciani 664171/4
Shmiciani Hospital 669131
University Hospital 845845
Al-Musader Hospital 6672719
The Islamic Abdali 666127/7
Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6
Italian, Al-Mubajreen 777101/3
Al-Bashir, J. Ashrafieh 775111/26
Army, Marla 891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital 022240/50
Amal Hospital 674155

ZARQA:
Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)983323
Zarqa National Hospital (09)908560

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) Information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (06)63200-5, where it should always be verified.

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

09:00 Damascus (RU)
09:00 Jeddah (RU)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

09:30 Doha (RU)
09:30 Larissa (RU)
09:30 Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RU)
16:00 New York, Amsterdam (RU)
16:00 Istanbul (RU)
16:00 Madrid, Rome (RU)
18:00 Paris, Geneva (RU)
18:15 London, Brussels (RU)
18:15 Vienna, Frankfurt (RU)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights (Terminal 1)

11:00 Istanbul (RU)
11:00 Tunis, Casablanca (RU)
11:30 Amsterdam, New York (RU)
11:45 London (RU)
19:15 Aqaba (RU)
19:30 Colombo (RU)
20:10 Cairo (RU)
20:10 New Delhi (RU)
20:10 Riyadh (RU)
20:30 Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RU)
22:00 Calcutta, Bangkok (RU)
22:45 Sanaa (RU)

Other Flights (Terminal 2)

06:15 Beirut (ME)
13:00 Cairo (MS)
14:00 Sanaa (YV)
21:20 Baghdad (IR)
21:20 Karachi (PK)

MARKET PRICES

Upper/lower price in file per 100

Apple (red) 700/760
Apple (yellow) 500/500
Banana (Mekassar) 500/450
Banana (Mekassar) 500/350
Beans 500/500
Cabbage 700/600
Carrot 180/120
Cauliflower 220/150
Cucumbers (large) 300/250
Cucumbers (small) 540/420
Eggplant 250/200
Garlic 650/550
Grapefruit 180/120
Lemon 180/120
Marrow (large) 300/250
Marrow (small) 300/200
Onion (dry) 300/400
Onion (green) 220/170
Orange 420/230
Pepper (hot) 1000/800
Pepper (sweet) 480/420
Potato 140/90
Sage 600/500
Spinach 200/150
Tomato 280/220

Ministry adopts plan to boost agricultural, poultry production

AMMAN (Petra) — The Ministry of Agriculture has adopted a plan for 1992 designed to boost agricultural production, including vegetables, fruits and cereals, and to boost poultry production and table eggs.

According to ministry officials, the plan entails increasing arable land grown with crops and a diversification of the types of crops produced in Jordan with a view to ensuring food security for the country.

Agriculture Minister Fayez Khasawneh said that the ministry plans to carry out projects through 13 major agricultural schemes during 1992.

The ministry's plan, he said, includes boosting the role of modern technology and research as well as increasing production of fruit tree saplings at the ministry's various nurseries. He said these nurseries would produce at least 890,000 fruit tree saplings during the current year.

The ministry's plans entail the production of no less than 207 tonnes of wheat, 126 tonnes of barley, 26 tonnes of lentils and 18 tonnes of chick peas in the form of seeds which

will be distributed to the farmers, the minister noted.

Referring to livestock, he said that the government will carry on with plans to improve new strains of sheep at its own farms. He said the government plans to distribute the sheep to livestock breeders at cost price to encourage them to increase their efforts in sheep fattening projects.

Going hand in hand with the sheep fattening programme, the minister said, the ministry plans to double its production of veterinary vaccines this year and it will conduct studies designed to provide full protection of animals.

Dr. Khasawneh noted that the ministry has adopted three plans for developing lands, the first being within the Zarqa River Basin where 32,000 dunums are involved in the project. The second project is for the development of the Hammam Basin in the eastern semi-desert regions around Rweished, where a pasture of 1.8 million dunum plot of land is involved. He said 600,000 dunums will be planted with cereals while 30,000 other



The Jordan Valley, which usually supplies the Kingdom with most of its vegetables and fruits, has been hardly hit by the recent storms. (File photo)

dunums of high lands will be reclaimed in the third plan.

In reference to range and afforestation projects, the minister noted that there are plans for greening 18,500 dunums of semi arid land. The ministry's nurseries will pro-

duce seven million tree saplings to be planted in these areas, the minister added. Also in the ministry's plans are programmes for the preservation of soil, creating pasture lands and providing protection to forests against fires.

Most northern, central Jordan Valley produce destroyed, officials say

By Elia Nasrallah
Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — The late snowstorms, frost and floods will make Jordanians dependent for their vegetables and fruit on the southern Jordan Valley regions, at least for the foreseeable future, according to observers and Agriculture Ministry officials.

Northern and central Jordan Valley farmers contacted by the Jordan Times drew a gloomy picture of the situation, noting that nearly 100 per cent of the vegetables and fruits grown in their farmlands have been washed away or inundated by the floods with no hope of saving any part of the harvest.

According to Ministry of Agriculture Secretary General Ghaleb Abu Arabi, the southern Jordan Valley, extending south of the Dead Sea, has not been affected by the severe weather conditions of the past two months and will continue to supply the market with vegetables and fruits.

Mr. Abu Arabi told the Jordan Times that most areas hit

were those of the northern Jordan Valley region. He said, 2,800 dunums grown with bananas and 4,200 dunums grown with vegetables like eggplants, pepper, tomatoes, potatoes and string beans were 100 per cent lost. Most of the damage to the crops in the northern Jordan Valley occurred due to the floods which inundated vast areas of land, said Mr. Abu Arabi. He said that the bursting of dams in the occupied territories and Syria has exacerbated the situation, causing more floods with larger areas of land covered by water.

In the central Jordan Valley region around Deir Alla, the farmlands were mostly affected by the frost before the floods came, according to Mr. Abu Arabi. He said that tomatoes, eggplants and other vegetables in this area sustained heavy damage ranging between 30 and 100 per cent.

The hardest hit areas, he said were those of the 22nd and 23rd basins where 2,084 dunums of vegetables and 1,415 dunums of bananas sustained almost 100 per cent damage.

Mr. Abu Arabi said that the frost which occurred late last month and the high winds caused more damages, especially to the vegetables grown under the plastic sheets. He said that the plastic sheets with their supporting beams and the plants underneath were either washed away or completely covered by water.

Referring to the Jordan Valley areas around south Shuneh, Mr. Abu Arabi said that an average of 60 per cent of the vegetables were damaged.

He said 8,000 dunums of eggplants, 2,000 dunums of marrow or squash and 300 dunums of potatoes were completely lost. Mr. Abu Arabi said that 60 per cent of the 10,000 dunums of bananas were lost, along with 40 per cent of the string beans and 60 per cent of the tomatoes in the south Shuneh area.

Mr. Abu Arabi said that the Ghor Safi region in the southern regions of the Dead Sea escaped unharmed and will continue to supply the markets with vegetables.

Referring to the highlands, Mr. Abu Arabi said that there were also losses there and the ministry has set up committees which are now touring various areas to make estimates of damage. Fences in the highlands sustaining damage will be re-built by the ministry and Jordan Valley farmers will be issued soft loans at 2 per cent interest to help them resume their activities.

He said poultry farms and others sustaining losses were also included in the government plans but at present there can be no estimate of the losses, especially as the River Jordan has flooded, reaching between one half of a kilometre to two kilometres in breadth and inundating the lands along the East Bank.

Minister of Agriculture Fayez Khasawneh told the Jordan Times earlier this month that the damages were estimated between 50 and 90 per cent. He said that the government has set up a ministerial committee to make estimates of the extent of damage to farmlands.

Arab Historians Union call for solidarity, unity

AMMAN (Petra) — Secretary General of the Arab Historians Union (AHU) Mustafa Al Najjar arrived in Amman Tuesday en route to Baghdad after taking part in the AHU's General Assembly meetings held recently in Aden.

In an arrival statement, Dr. Najjar said Arab historians stressed the unity of Arab historians and decided to keep the union's headquarters in Baghdad. The General Assembly praised the positive stands demonstrated by some Arab countries during the difficult and delicate circumstances which the union has been through.

Dr. Najjar pointed out that the General Assembly approved the expansion of the union's organizational structure to allow for the appointment of new assistants to the secretary general.

The assembly elected Sayyed Abdul Aziz Salem from Egypt as first assistant to the secretary general, and Mohammad Masha-

dani from Iraq and Abdul Karim Karim from Yemen as second and third assistants, respectively.

The assembly called for lifting the sanctions imposed on Iraq since its takeover of Kuwait on Aug. 2, 1990, and decided to keep the union's headquarters in Baghdad.

It also condemned the attempts to traffic antiquities, manuscripts and items of cultural and historical importance outside the Arab countries and stressed the need for restoring the ones already stolen.

The assembly approved a recommendation to start classes in the union's Institute for Higher Studies in Arab History. However, it noted that the institute will award higher diplomas and master's degree only during the first stage.

Taking part in the General Assembly's meetings were representatives of Jordan, Sudan, Morocco, Tunisia, Libya, Yemen, Iraq and Algeria.

Home News in Brief

King congratulates Iran

AMMAN (J.T.) — His Majesty King Hussein Tuesday sent a cable to Iranian President Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani congratulating him on his country's national day. The King wished President Rafsanjani continued good health and happiness and the Iranian people further progress and prosperity.

Princess to open exhibition today

AMMAN (Petra) — Her Royal Highness Princess Wijdan Ali today opens an art exhibition by Spanish artist Suad Al Ashiri. The event, which will be held at the Spanish Cultural Centre, includes 35 art plates.

Surprise! House session delayed again

AMMAN (Petra) — Speaker of the Lower House of Parliament Abdul Latif Arabiyat has postponed the House's session scheduled for today until Sunday evening. The House's session was supposed to be held last Sunday, but was postponed due to the current weather conditions prevailing in the country.

Minister returns from Tokyo

AMMAN (Petra) — Industry and Trade Minister Abdullah Ensour Tuesday returned home after a week long visit to Tokyo during which he held talks with Japanese officials on commercial exchange and other economic issues.

Official to join Olympic committee

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordanian Olympic Committee will take part in the Asian Olympic Council's Statistics and Information Committee meetings which will be held in Tehran on Feb. 23. The two-day meetings will discuss means of enhancing cooperation and coordination among the national Olympic Committees in the fields of statistics and exchange of information. Representing Jordan in this two-day event will be Jordan's Olympic Committee Secretary General Abdullah Abu Nuwar.

Bank deposits increase

AMMAN (Petra) — Deposits with commercial banks during November 1991 increased to JD 1,477,819,000, compared with JD 1,410,319,000 during the same month during 1990, thus registering an increase of JD 67.5 million.

Football match rescheduled

AMMAN (Petra) — The Jordan Football Association has decided to postpone a football match between Al Wihdat and Al Ramtha scheduled for last Tuesday until Friday due to the weather conditions prevailing in the country.

Rain, snow ease Jordan drought

AMMAN (R) — Torrential rain and blizzards have eased Jordan's three-year-old drought, filling reservoirs to bursting point and replenishing underground supplies.

"For this year, we have a surplus in water for our agriculture needs," Jordan Valley Water Authority Chief Abdul Aziz Weshah

said Tuesday.

The Kingdom's dams were at full capacity of 110 million cubic metres of water, he said, adding that proper management of expected further rainfall would provide enough water for an additional year.

Jordan has been hit by severe water shortages since 1989. The

drought cut farm production by 30 per cent last year.

Rain and snow during the Middle East's harshest winters for years have also flooded the Jordan River for the first time since 1952.

In another spin-off for the Kingdom, a dam in the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights burst last

week, sending water cascading into the river leaving to the Dead Sea.

Water levels in the saline lake shared by Jordan and Israel have been falling by about 80 cm (31 inches) a year. They have risen by 61 cm (24 inches) in the past two months, Mr. Weshah said.

Doctors use medicine as common ground to help and understand people

By Serene Halaseh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Finding common ground for people to work in at this age and time seems to be a very highly improbable thing to do, but for one doctor the solution was the platform of medicine, a universal language he regarded as the answer and the link between cultures and nations alike.

Dr. Charles Horton, a founding member of Physicians for Peace, has strived since the establishment of his organization to promote friendships and peace through medicine.

"We are using medicine not politics. We are all doctors and we have pledged to work on our fellow men and to take care of their ills and make them better," said Dr. Horton, who led a highly trained eight man team during a recent visit to Jordan.

Physicians for Peace, have conducted 22 missions since its establishment in 1985. Working strictly on a volunteer basis, highly qualified doctors and surgeons have so far operated on 3,500 patients in many areas around the world. Their missions have taken them to Egypt, Greece, Iraq, Jordan,

Panama, Syria, Turkey, the West Bank and Israel.

"We believe in the universal goodness of man," Dr. Horton said. "We also believe that there are good people in all countries and we should not only let ourselves hear of the bad things."

During his stay in Jordan, Dr. Horton was awarded a medal by His Majesty King Hussein in appreciation of his humanitarian work in alleviating the suffering of people around the world.

"It was a total surprise," Dr. Horton said of receiving the medal. "It is a great honour, and I hope to be a good ambassador of Jordan in the world."

In addition to providing medical care to the needy, the missions offer opportunities to form friendships between doctors around the world whose countries are politically antagonists, thus

promoting an atmosphere of cooperation and peace.

The Physicians for Peace mission to Jordan was hosted by the Noor Al Hussein Foundation in cooperation with the Royal Medical Services and the Jordanian Society of Plastic Surgeons.

During their ten-day stay in the Kingdom, eight highly qualified volunteer reconstructive surgeons performed 12 operations on needy patients. The operations, performed at King Hussein Medical City, ranged from reconstructive facial surgeries to hand surgeries.

The surgeons also visited medical schools in Jordanian universities and conducted joint scientific meetings with their Jordanian counterparts in which both sides exchanged medical and scientific information.

According to one team doctor, Dr. Kevin Smith, the meetings were held in a spirit of exchanging information and sharing opinions rather than teaching and learning.

"There was a collegial medical exchange with doctors here because the medical care in Jordan is extremely superb," Dr. Smith said.

Another form of promoting friendship and peace between doctors around the world is through a medical training fellowship programme offered for young physicians to train in the United States for 3-6-12 month intervals.

Members of the team left Amman on Tuesday for the United States and, according to Dr. Smith, some team members will return to the area — the West Bank — on April 4.

CDD has had busy year, report shows

AMMAN (Petra) — The Civil Defence Department has attended to 2,622 incidents since New Year's eve, according to the CDD's public relations director, Captain Nabil Kavar.

The figure included 85 fires, 1,475 first aid and 1,062 rescue cases. Capt. Kavar said that the incidents resulted in 1,496 different injuries and 27 deaths. The death toll included 7 people who were killed as a result of road accidents in Jordan; two from fire, one from the collapse of a house in Balqa and one from gas suffocation.

He added that three people died as a result of drowning in the Zarqa River stream. The death toll also included two people who caught fire while filling in kerosene stoves and 13 because of illness and old age.

Capt. Kavar noted that there was an increase in the number of incidents, attributing this to the weather conditions currently prevailing in the country. He called on citizens to abide by the public safety conditions and to adhere to the instructions issued by the authorities concerned in order to avoid such incidents.

Dog displays pyromaniacal tendencies

AMMAN (J.T.) — A villa located in Shmeisani caught fire when a kerosene stove was overturned as a result of a friendly play between a dog, belonging to the owners of the house, and the family's son, according to a report in Al Dussour Arabic daily. Soon after the stove overturned, fire engulfed the contents of the room. The fire scene resulted in large financial loss to the family and the injury of the dog.

WHAT'S GOING ON

EXHIBITIONS

- ★ Exhibition by Iraqi artist Salma Al Alaiq at the Royal Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of drawings by the French school's kindergarten children at the French Cultural Centre.
- ★ Exhibition of oil and water colour paintings by Tetsu Wegetins, Lucy Maria, Hada Bitar and Jennifer Bowker at Alla Art Gallery.
- ★ Graphic art exhibition by Sadek Kwaish at Baladna Art Gallery, Gardens Street.

THEATRE

- ★ Arabic play entitled "Who's There?" at the Royal Cultural Centre — 8 p.m.

CONDOLENCES

The editor and the staff of the Jordan Times would like to extend their deepest condolences for the passing away of Mrs. Haidouhi Darakjian, grandmother of Jordan Times reporter Aileen Bannayn, who died Saturday. May her soul rest in peace.



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Jordan Times

An independent Arab political daily published in English by the Jordan Press Foundation. Established 1975.
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Wisdom when it counts

THE DECLARATION of a state of emergency in Algeria is nothing short of a setback for the democratisation process in that country and for democratic hopes elsewhere in the Arab World. It is most unfortunate that conditions in that important Arab state had deteriorated to the extent that its leaders found it necessary to halt the democratic march. Without the desire to lecture anyone or to draw parallels when the circumstances may differ, Algeria and other Arab countries facing difficulties in reconciling pluralistic democracy with their peculiar situation, could have benefitted a great deal from the Jordanian experiment in democratisation. There is little doubt that through statesmanship and popular awareness Jordan has fortunately been able to steer its fledgling democracy through high waves till it reached the stability and progress that it now enjoys.

When the Islamists in Algeria, as mainly represented by the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS), appeared to be on the brink of gaining parliamentary majority, much of the country panicked and decided to deal with this "danger" in a blunt way instead of trying to establish a modus operandi between it and the other political forces in the country. Former Algerian President Chadli Benjedid was of the opinion that coexistence with the Islamists could be secured provided there were ironclad assurances that the basic tenets of the Algerian Constitution remained intact. Granted it is easier said than done when it comes to providing for all times such basic constitutional safeguards against allowing the country to drift into chaos and tyranny, whether by the majority or the minority. The avenue proposed by the former Algerian leader appears, nevertheless, to be less problematic than the state of civil strife and instability that the country seems to have suffered in the wake of the suspension of national elections.

It is also the fault of FIS for sowing fear and anxiety in the minds of many Algerians to such an extent that panic broke loose in the country. By proposing to transform irreversibly the country according to their image and without any due concern for the other schools of thought, many Algerians, and rightly so, concluded that FIS does not seek to coexist with other political parties in the country, but rather is determined to cling to power for ever. This, many thought, would be achieved by uprooting pluralistic democracy once and for all. Had FIS given clear signals to all sides that it seeks to share power with other factions and exchange views with them, much of the chaos that ensued would have dissipated before exploding into an emergency rule.

Jordan has provided for a rather successful operational democracy where no party, no matter what and how it regards itself as having a monopoly on righteousness, should be allowed to turn into a tyrannical force that is capable of putting under its thumb all other constituencies.

Finally, it has to be said that the declared state of emergency is not the answer to the problems of Algeria. Maintaining a dialogue and a modus operandi with all factions in the country is the only viable way to resolve the impending conflict. But for this to happen, cool-headedness is required, not panic.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

FOREIGN MINISTER Kamel Abu Jaber is due to pay a visit to Damascus later this week in order to coordinate the Jordanian and Syrian positions with regard to the ongoing Middle East peace negotiations, and to counter Israel's stand vis-a-vis the settlement programme it is carrying out unlawfully in the occupied Arab lands, said Sawt Al Shaab daily. The paper said that coordination among the Arab parties at this stage is of paramount importance if the Arabs are to make a real headway in the negotiations and attain the aspired durable peace in the region. The paper said that the more adamant the Shamir government becomes the closer the Arabs should move, especially in the course of negotiations which have so far achieved nothing. The Shamir government is going ahead with its plans to build settlements on Arab land, is holding on to its intransigent stand and planting mines in the path of peace with the hope of driving the Arabs into desperation, said the paper. It said that the Shamir government had, from the very start of the negotiations, taken upon itself the task of aborting the peace process and is no doubt placing obstacles now, before the Feb. 24 date set for resuming the bilateral talks in Washington. The paper said that coordination of Arab positions before these talks is of paramount importance and Jordan is bent on doing just that in order to ensure the return of Arab rights and the restoration of usurped Arab territory.

AL DUSTOUR daily tackled the situation in Algeria in the wake of the recent events and the clashes between the government troops and the Islamic Salvation Front. The series of measures taken by the army-supported government of Algeria can by no means succeed in settling the political issue even if calm had been achieved in the country for the time being, said the daily. The situation in Algeria is very serious indeed, in view of the divisions among the political groups and the confrontation between the Salvation Front and the government; and should further disturbances occur, foreign forces are bound to interfere in the country's internal affairs — a process which would cost the country dearly, the paper said. It said that the Arabs are watching the regrettable incidents with deep sadness and are also looking with concern over the future of democracy in this Arab country. It said that all concerned parties should resort to reason and dialogue in order to avoid violence that would benefit no one at all. It said everything possible should be done to stop the looming civil war from breaking out and also to save the country from military dictatorship.

Economic Forum

The shortcomings of the IMF programme

By Dr. Abdalla Malki

The set of objectives which a plan embraces is not a good or satisfactory gauge by which to measure its quality. What matters here is the bundle of ways and means employed to attain these objectives and how consistent these two groups are with each other. A plan or programme is essentially a set of goals but without the appropriate means the plan is, of course, no more than blueprint.

Probably with the exception of the International Monetary Fund itself, nobody or party claims that the IMF-sponsored economic adjustment programme for Jordan is a perfect document or is not improvable. Now, what are, accordingly, the shortcomings of this programme?

The basic defect in our adjustment programme is the open import policy it decrees. Jordan should not ban the importation of any goods nor impose quantitative restrictions on any imports. Additionally, tariff rates on any group of imports should not exceed a certain ceiling, purported to be 50 per cent (in the short term and probably lower beyond that). A full-fledged free import policy of this sort is self-defeating in a country whose economic dilemma beams out from its inability to repay its foreign debt. Trying to adjust the economy under a free import policy is very much like installing a boiler to heat a house whose door and windows are flung wide open. Foreign currencies needed to repay debt will not be saved for this purpose because they leak out

through the free import door as does heat.

The second shortcoming is the insistence of the IMF on the unbelated dismantling of price subsidies on some basic consumer goods. This creates popular resentment in a situation where public support is indispensable for the success of any economic reform. The IMF seems to be very adamant about this issue and is discarding its socioeconomic arithmetic. It is over-obsessed with the economic philosophical content of subsidies.

Another shortfall is the constraints put on the borrowing of the treasury from the public (Jordanians) as compared with its freedom to borrow externally on a net basis for almost the next 10 years. If money borrowed from the public is to be used for meeting part of the government's domestic obligation, namely and especially capital spending, there will be no point in prohibiting us to use our own money which will be, however, repaid sooner or later or even taxed away through actual taxation or through inflation. Through a proper approach, the Jordanian treasury may even borrow foreign currencies from Jordanians.

Another very serious pitfall is the absence of what seems to be a coherent scheme of investment and financing. It is one thing to "guesstimate" a certain volume of investments and adopt it as a plan target and it is quite another to get it to materialise. It is even another very different thing to control the import and export contents of these investments as to make them conform to the

external trade targets of the plan, which is indispensable to generating the surplus foreign exchange needed to start retiring your external debt. It is here that the question of ways and means becomes so dominant and absolutely decisive. This aspect of the IMF adjustment programme is very vague because, first, the contents of the programme have not, officially, been made public. Second, any projections that extend for more than five years are senseless from statistical and technical points of view. The adjustment programme envisages that Jordan will be able to amortise its external debt (net) 10 years from now. Jordan will be able to do so only if all economic variables behave exactly as scheduled and desired, over a 10 year period. Up until now, no econometrician or computer claim they can project, with any degree of reliability, the path of these variables over such a period. If that were possible, the Americans would not have failed in forecasting the present recession of the American economy, a process which covers only one year!

Nobody or party should oppose economic adjustment because reform is a national necessity. But there are different versions of adjustment. The best version is the one that maximises national benefits through goals attained. By insisting on free trade, the present IMF programme maximises costs. We have to wait until its full details are disclosed to see what it intends to do about maximising benefits and by which means.

Palestinians eke out grim existence in Lebanon

By Samia Nakhoul
 Reuter

BEIRUT — They arrived in Lebanon with temporary tents 44 years ago and now live mainly on handouts in tumbledown concrete shacks. They and their descendants, part of a Palestinian refugee community numbering more than half a million, say their plight is steadily worsening.

Their dream of going home has also turned into a nightmare. "I lived on the hope of going back to Palestine, but now I know I will die here. I don't even think that my grandchildren will see it either," said 75-year-old Mohammad Ajneh, who ekes out his declining years in the Shatila refugee camp.

Shatila, a place of horror almost 10 years ago when Christian militiamen massacred hundreds of its inhabitants during the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, is one of 12 refugee shanty towns dotted around the country.

Shatila is considered the worst. It is winter and a filthy cocktail of rainwater, sewage, rotting garbage and mud oozes along the narrow alleyways.

"Our life is disgusting. It's full of death... we live in a cage we can't come out of," said 14-year-old Jawaher Al Ali from the camp in suburban Beirut. His four brothers and mother were killed in the 1982 invasion and battles with militiamen.

Refugees voice despair, refusing to believe that efforts to settle the Arab-Israeli conflict could end their ordeal.

"My life's goal is to get out of here but deep down I know I will be living here forever," Jawaher said. "I often feel so desperate, I sit and cry... I have hope in nothing."

Palestinians who fled to Lebanon in 1948 to escape the war that marked the birth of Israel arrived only with tents. They thought they would be going home in a few weeks.

Years passed and the refugees grew to 100,000. There are now 550,000 of them. About 300,000 live in the camps. The rest are semi-integrated and live in towns alongside the Lebanese.

Most of the Palestinians are casualties of war. They were caught up by 15 years of civil strife in Lebanon, including the Israeli invasion, massacres by a pro-Israeli Christian militia and three years of battles with the Muslim Amal fighters in which thousands were killed.

Syrian troops, part of a 40,000-strong force in the country, keep tight control of the Beirut camps, imposing dusk-to-dawn curfews, checking people for weapons, and banning books considered politically dangerous.

Most of the concrete hovels are so dark that residents light oil lamps and candles to see during the day.

Heaps of rubble from demolished houses and tatty wall posters of slain guerrillas and

civilians testify to the years of conflict.

Fayez Najjar, his wife and nine children huddle together for warmth on four mattresses in the middle of a dank room. Rain leaks into buckets set up around them.

Khaled Hachem, his wife and five children sleep, bath, cook, wash and hang their laundry in a four metre by four metre room. Clothes, shoes and dirty laundry compete for floor space with plates, pans, and food rations.

The Hachems, like the 2,000 other residents of Shatila — before the massacre there were 10,000 people here — have not had electricity for three years. There is no sanitation, water only occasionally.

"I have no choice but to live this life until God takes my soul," said Hachem who lost an eye and three of his children in the war. "I will go straight to the cemetery from here."

Dr. Hassan Saleh, head of Sha-

tila's Red Crescent clinic, said conditions caused an outbreak of typhoid in the camp late last year.

"Bronchitis, allergies, influenza, tuberculosis and skin diseases are common at the camps," Mr. Saleh said.

Officials say illiteracy is rising among the Palestinians, traditionally among the best-educated Arabs.

Ele Saaf, the Lebanon director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) which provides free education for about 69,000 Palestinian students, said only 16.5 per cent passed in last year's exams compared with 80 per cent at the start of the civil war in 1975.

Palestinian officials said educational, medical, and economic services had worsened. The Palestine Liberation Organisation (PLO) — deprived of Arab money after siding with Iraq in the Gulf war — had cut aid to Lebanon refugees.

Only 38,000 of the refugees,

deemed extremely needy, receive monthly UNRWA rations of cash, food and blankets.

Relief officials put the unemployment rate among refugees at 65 per cent. Unemployment shot up after Gulf states expelled thousands of Palestinians to Jordan and Lebanon in 1991.

Zahira Abdul Fattah and her 11-year-old son — the result of her rape by Christian militiamen at Shatila in 1982 — were left with nothing two weeks ago. Their home burned down after a kerosene lamp fell to the ground.

Kheir Mohsen, a 42-year-old blind man, and his wife Fatima, who lost her leg in the Shatila massacres, live with their three children on charity and a 10-dollar PLO monthly grant.

"I wish the Europeans would send up an animal protection society," said Zahra Isa, a 50-year-old housewife. "Maybe they will have mercy on us and treat us like their animals."

Never mind the age, feel the quality

By Sue Palmer

PRIMARY teachers have become expert at doing things the hard way. As an example of long-term standing-in-a-hammock, there can be little to beat our devotion to a developmental model of education which exists within an organisational system completely at odds with it. As so often with our profession, I don't know whether this dedication amounts to saintliness or certifiable lunacy.

Primary schools are organised on a chronological basis. Children enter at five and move up the school once a year after the summer holidays. Teachers know this is nonsense. The only thing that five-year-old children have in common is their age; and the odds against any child maintaining a neat linear progression in physical, social, emotional and academic development throughout the seven years of primary school must be something like googolplex to one.

We have, therefore, despite the neat chronological system, attempted to teach children in a way consistent with their individual development. This is hard when there are 30-odd in a class, all developing at their own particular rates. In one top primary class I taught, there was one boy who had trouble writing any word of more than three letters and could not count beyond 20, while at the other end of the ability scale was a lad who was taking an Open University maths course in his spare time.

Now everyone is discovering yet again that there are problems with teaching in primary schools. But they miss the essential point: a chronological system and a developmental model do not mix.

There are calls for a return to streaming by ability, but within the chronological framework, so that some children are labelled as eight-year-olds. As and others as eight-year-olds Bs, Cs and Ds; this is anathema to teachers who are concerned for their pupils' emotional as well as academic development. There are suggestions that bright children should move more rapidly through the system; a partial recognition that chronology does not work, but again singling out some children and leaving the others stuck on the age-group treadmill. There are suggestions that older children need a different sort of teaching from younger children: nobody seems to see that children at different stages need different teaching — it is not necessarily age-related.

When the national curriculum was published some years ago, many primary teachers paused in hammock-balancing to give a cry

of joy and relief. "It's a developmental model!" we yelled. The first five levels for the core curriculum subjects seems to sum up with remarkable succinctness what could be expected of most children as they moved through primary school. Maybe schools would now have the courage to move away from chronology.

But no, there was also mention of "key stages", which were age-linked, and the key stages were concerned with assessment, which was the thing that frightened everybody most. So children have remained chained firmly, for academic purposes, to their dates of birth.

But it would be so easy to reorganise things. To arrange the

pupils in a primary school in five broad bands according to their developmental levels. To arrange transfer between bands based on teachers' assessments and occasional standardised tests (which each pupil would take, like the driving test, when he or she was ready to take them) at the end of every term. Children would progress up the school in a much more fluid way; not as a class, each year in early September, but in dribs and drabs, when they were ready to move on.

It would be much easier to tailor teaching to pupils' needs. A teacher would need to cater for the developmental level in his or her band only, not, as at present, for a very wide range across a

chronologically-formed class. There would be opportunities to improve teachers' promotion prospects, too. In large schools most bands would require a team of teachers, one of whom would be senior teacher with overall responsibility for the band, but still working in the classroom. By Bands 4 and 5 it may be thought appropriate to arrange teaching resources differently, perhaps using subject specialists.

There would be some problems, of course. What about the pupil who should be in Band 3 for English but still at Band 2 level in some aspects of maths? Transfer would have to depend on an overall developmental level, and

extra provision made for such anomalies, but wouldn't it concentrate the mind wonderfully on those elements of each child's education that needed particular attention? And extra provision would, of course, be necessary for dyslexic pupils and children with other specific learning difficulties.

And what about the children, wouldn't they mind? Wouldn't those who moved more slowly through the system than the average be labelled failures? I believe such failure would be no more noticed than that of the child who is constantly bottom-group material among his chronological peers. When I taught in a small

country school where there weren't enough children to make chronological classes, I had to group my pupils largely by ability, not age. I was obviously not bothered about age differences so the pupils soon forgot them too.

Children are generally much happier when asked to do work at an appropriate level for them, and much more likely to succeed. Then, once they are succeeding at one particular level, they have a great incentive to move on to the next. We could avoid so much misery, heart-searching and mispent effort if we acknowledged that this does not only happen on Sept. 6 every year. — The Independent.



Teaching children of the same age but with widely varying abilities makes little sense for staff or pupils (file photo)

8 policemen killed in Algeria

(Continued from page 1)

the military took power one month ago.

France dismayed

France expressed dismay on Tuesday at violence in Algeria and said only an end to confrontation could enable a return to democracy.

A foreign ministry statement made no mention of Algeria's declaration on Sunday of a 12-month state of emergency and appeared to condone implicitly a crackdown on the FIS.

"France cannot be indifferent to what is happening in Algeria. It expresses its consternation at the cycle of violence," spokesman Daniel Bernard told reporters.

"France hopes the Algerian people will find the means to overcome the trial they are undergoing and to put an end to confrontation. Algeria will only find the way to democracy on these conditions."

Several French leading newspapers were less coy, saying the country's new military-backed rulers appeared to be rejected by the population as a whole.

"The rejection of the new authorities now goes way beyond a hard core of FIS activists," said the leftwing Liberation.

"The Islamic mobilisation has

set fire to Algeria's social and demographic powder keg, drawing in numerous marginalised and desperate youth."

The right-wing El Figaro said it was "certain the fundamentalists had shrewdly taken advantage of increasing hardship and loss of hope among Algerians."

"What is really needed is an economic miracle. But an improvement in standards of living is certainly not for tomorrow or even conceivable in the medium term," Le Figaro said.

The respected daily Le Monde later denounced the Algerian rulers' move, saying the state of emergency was "a measure usually used by a dictatorship."

"The country is edging irresistibly closer to a state of rampant insurrection," the daily said. "Recent scenes of city riots have conjured up the Palestinian intifada and the army's response has brought back memories of the Algerian war."

"In these circumstances, what value is there in promises to retain the democratic process and give the people a say as soon as possible — promises which were vague enough to start off with?"

Le Monde said the move risked alienating moderate Algerians, relieved when the authorities prevented the fundamentalists from coming to power, and could well push disaffected Algerian youths into the arms of the FIS.

Less housing units than claimed

(Continued from page 1)

That statement was calculated to send shivers down the spines of Israeli leaders, who depend on U.S. aid to pay their foreign debts and keep the richly Israeli economy afloat.

The tide of 400,000 Soviet Jews in the past two years has created 11 per cent Israeli unemployment, a two-decade high.

But hardline Shamir is unlikely to give up his belief that the occupied territories must belong to Israel for security and national

istic reasons. Few believe he will stop the settlements, especially before a June 23 election.

In his interview, Mr. Baker said flatly that Israel should stop settlements and repeated that Washington was no longer prepared to finance them, directly or indirectly.

"Settlements themselves are an obstacle to peace and we have since 1967 told the Israelis that it is the view of every administration, Republican and Democrat alike, that they should stop settlement activity," Mr. Baker said.

Warm air, occasional sun

(Continued from page 1)

reviewed at a cabinet meeting Monday evening.

The meeting by the ministerial committee entrusted with studying the consequences of the bad weather conditions, discussed means of dealing with the situation.

The meeting, chaired by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Education Thouqan Hindawi discussed the damages to the infrastructure including electricity and

road networks and the damage to the agricultural lands in the highlands and the Jordan Valley.

An initial plan has been drawn up by the committee to deal with the situation, according to Petra. Those attending the meeting were the ministers of finance, planning, water and irrigation, interior, energy and mineral resources, communications, public works and housing, supply, health and agriculture as well as minister of state for prime ministry affairs.

Egypt arrests 3rd Israeli 'spy'

CAIRO (R) — Egypt has arrested a third member of an Israeli Arab family on suspicion of spying for the Jewish state, security sources said on Tuesday. Maged Fares Masrati, 25, was arrested on Monday while trying to cross the border from Egypt to Israel with a forged passport. The sources said he confessed to spying for the Israeli Mossad intelligence agency along with his father and sister.

Fares Subhi Masrati, 41, and his daughter Fayqa, 17, were arrested last week and are being

held in a maximum security prison.

Diplomats said they believed they were the first Israelis to be detained by Egypt on suspicion of spying since the two states signed a peace treaty in 1979.

Security sources said the son had been taken to a maximum security prison in Cairo. No formal charges have been brought against the suspects.

Israeli diplomats say they have pressed Egypt to let them see evidence against the Masratits but have received no answer.

NATO could be in trouble over ties with U.S.

By Nicholas Doughty
Reuter

BRUSSELS — NATO could be heading for crisis now that the United States, its senior member, has broken a long-standing taboo by suggesting that success in world trade talks is linked to the future of the Western alliance.

U.S. policy-makers including Vice President Dan Quayle touched on the issue at a weekend defence conference in Munich, with some officials suggesting that failure in the GATT trade talks could encourage an American withdrawal from Europe.

Most analysts and NATO officials contacted by Reuters said the implied threat reflected domestic U.S. political worries in an election year, with President

George Bush coming under fire for not doing enough to solve economic problems at home.

But many said such rhetoric could strain trans-Atlantic ties which have been at the heart of NATO since it was founded in 1949 — links embodied by the U.S. troop presence in Europe.

Mr. Quayle, clearly attempting to repair any damage, said on Monday there was no link between GATT talks and the U.S. military presence in Europe.

But remarks by Mr. Quayle and other U.S. officials at the Munich seminar had already provoked a frosty response from one ally.

"It won't work for you to say, we have to agree on GATT or we'll leave NATO," said Dutch Foreign Minister Hans Van Den Broek.

The United States and some European allies are already at odds over how far the European Community should develop an independent defence role in the future. Analysts say comments linking trade to security issues will increase those tensions.

"This is souring the debate," said Martin McCusker, a defence specialist with the North Atlantic Assembly in Brussels. "It's just going to make it more difficult for everybody."

During the decades of the cold war, there was tacit agreement among North Atlantic Treaty Organisation members that solid trans-Atlantic ties were so important to fending off a Soviet-backed threat that other problems like trade would not be allowed to interfere with security. "Now, the glue that held us all

together — the threat — has gone and there are no more restrictions," said one NATO official. "This kind of debate could be very damaging to the alliance, whether it's a U.S. election year posturing or not."

NATO Secretary General Manfred Woerner, speaking at the Munich conference, acknowledged the link between trade and security and said that a major U.S.-European row over subsidies in the GATT talks would have to be resolved.

"If that question is not satisfactorily dealt with, we risk a profound crisis in the trans-Atlantic alliance," said Mr. Woerner.

The United States is already planning to reduce its forces in Europe to around 150,000 less than half the level just before the collapse of communism in East-

ern Europe.

Washington, worried that voters want to see more savings to help an ailing domestic economy, recently ordered the pace of withdrawal to be increased.

Few officials in the 16-nation alliance or U.S. legislators believe the United States will keep anywhere near 150,000 troops in Europe, with many predicting that figure could be halved.

"For now, no one doubts that the U.S. administration wants to keep at least some troops in Europe," said one alliance diplomat. "But the mood of isolationism is growing in the U.S. and a war of words on trade would just make it worse."

What is more, analysts say, such attacks are not likely to win many points for Washington.

"During the cold war, the U.S. could have applied leverage in trade rows with this kind of threat and there's fair chance that it might have won concessions," said Regina Cowen-Karp of the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

"Not any more. The Europeans want the Americans to stay, but there is no longer a real, immediate threat to them. Trying to apply pressure in this way is not going to work."

Mr. McCusker of the North Atlantic Assembly agreed.

"They're shooting themselves in the foot by linking two issues that are not really related," he said. "Besides, it is at least as much in the interest of the Americans to stay in Europe as it is for the Europeans to have them here."

A computer which reads for blind people

By Pierre-Albert Lambert

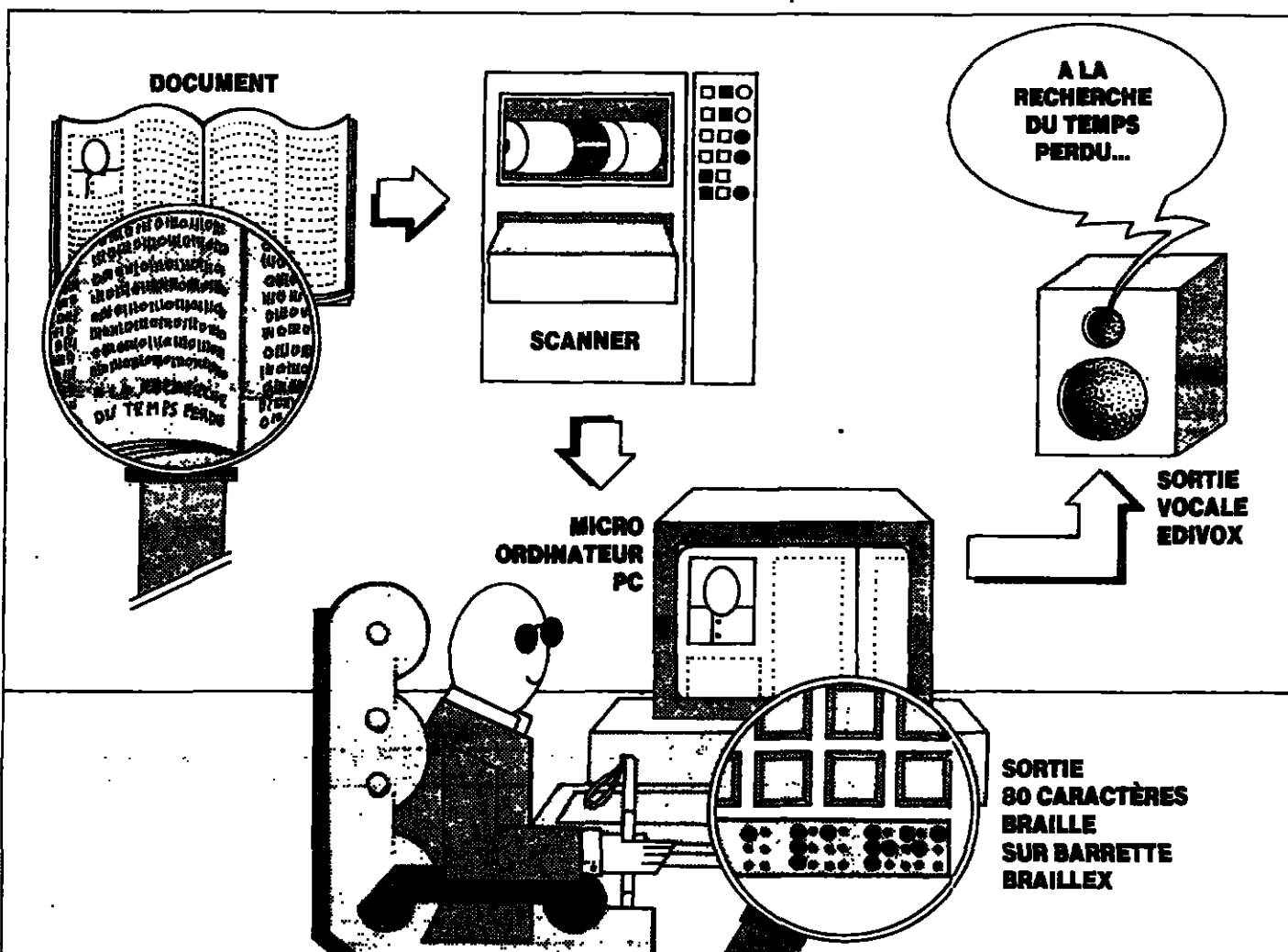
Blind people in Paris are now able to read the 150,000 works in the Cité des Sciences in Paris, thanks to a computer system which is unique in Europe and which immediately transforms the text of their choice into an artificial voice.

It started out as a challenge. How could a sightless person become a real reader in a library? Computer experts have solved the problem by creating the Louis Braille room at the Cité des Sciences et de l'Industrie at La Villette in Paris.

Paul Héricart, 26, has been blind from birth. He is fascinated by mathematics and is one of the keenest readers in this library. "Together with basic works, I can find the best and most recent books published on the subject which interests me," he says. He spends two afternoons a week studying there.

As soon as the sightless person arrives at the media library, he has no problem finding his way. There is a special guided walkway in relief, guiding him to the Louis Braille room. Once there, he easily knows where to go, thanks to indications by sound, smell and touch. His hearing is attracted by the pleasant sound of a fountain. Then he is guided by the smells of a little garden planted with hyacinths or jasmine, depending on the season. With his fingers, he can feel the Oregon pine rail which has been chosen for its lasting scent and tells him he has reached his destination.

Paul Héricart installs himself in one of the four individual listening booths for sightless persons. While the book he has ordered is brought to him, he switches on the computer with a loudspeaker



Sketch of the computer used by blind people in the 'city of science' in Paris (Photo by E. Chino/Explorer)

on top. The book is placed on his left on the table and is read, a page at a time, by an image numeriser, a kind of scanner. The computer

immediately turns the written text into a spoken text. The synthetic voice coming from the loudspeaker is perfectly understandable as punctuation is taken

into account. It is enough to press a key to stop or start the reading.

Ephemeral Braille. Rather than listening to the artificial voice, the user may pre-

fer to "read" the text he has chosen, in Braille. If so, he disconnects the loudspeaker and uses the "Braillex bar" in its place.

In front of the computer keyboard, there is a bar on which the blind person places his fingers. The bar has the same number of holes per character in it as there are dots in a Braille letter (six or eight). There are 80 characters to a line. For each character, little rods poke through the holes as required, to form the letters and the blind person can read them by feeling the bar. When he comes to the end of a line, he presses a key to have the following line. The line he has just read then disappears, hence the name "ephemeral Braille."

Since 1989, this system has been available for sightless persons at the Cité des Sciences. There are 60,000 sightless persons in France. It can be used free of charge but users have to book by phone. The Louis Braille room receives students, researchers and ordinary readers just like any library.

Pupils from Institutes for the Blind in Paris go and study there in small groups, waiting for the time when their establishments have such a system. The high cost of the equipment and the installation (2 million francs for four work units) explains why the system is not yet widespread.

The Louis Braille room was created thanks to close collaboration between a clever architect, Pierre-Louis Grosbois and the team of computer experts who designed the high performance system.

A young assistant at the Cité des Sciences, Joëlle Corvest, who is herself blind, played an essential part here. For years, she has devoted herself to finding means of overcoming the handicap of blindness, to facilitate access to culture for sightless persons. The Louis Braille room is largely her work — L'Actualité En France.

Saudis crack down on militants

(Continued from page 1)

ting up a shura council and reviewing state laws to ensure conformity with the Holy Koran and Islamic jurisprudence.

"In these difficult times in which we realised the need for change, we find it imperative to direct our energies towards reform," the petition said.

It pointed out that members

of the shura council "must be specialised individuals who are known for their honesty, loyalty and total independence, capable of resisting pressure that may influence the council's function." They want a council through which Saudis who are not members of the royal family could participate in governing.

The petition also called for "a review of existing political,

economic and administrative laws and regulations to abolish what contradicts Islamic sharia."

The long list of demands also includes "achieving a measure of justice and equality among members of the society, prosecuting high-ranking officials without exceptions for crimes such as corruption and mismanagement." It also urged a "fair distribution of public funds among citizens."

Although most of the signatories come from the religious and academic establishment, which is profoundly fun-

damentalist, some of their demands are usually associated with Saudi liberals.

One analyst said the "ulema remained silent and behaved during the war period and now they are asking to be rewarded for their cooperation. They want their share of power."

Western diplomats quoted by Reuters said that secret tapes by militant Saudi zealots fulminating against a wide range of topics from American weapons to liberated women to modern Arabic poetry are circulating privately throughout the Gulf region.

Sheikh Ibn Baz responded indirectly last month to the petitions by denouncing those who challenge the Islamic credentials of their political opponents, arguing that debate involving varying interpretations of Islam should be conducted on a more rational basis.

Although most analysts do not foresee a threat to the powerful regime, Sheikh Ibn Baz's response indicates that the authorities were taking seriously criticism by the zealots.

Some analysts claim the in-

creased militancy, which eventually led to the crackdown, was provoked by the government and was not only a legacy of the Gulf war that brought resentment of deeper Western influences and hopes of more representative government.

These analysts contend the government planted agents within the religious police network to carry out militant acts in order to give the government an excuse to crackdown on the mutawa, which were becoming more vocal in their criticism of the government's internal and external policies.

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Jordan Times'

JORDAN MARKET PLACE

Top four all fail in combined skiing event

Silver in the 7.5 km-sprint race went to German Antje Misersky and Russian Elena Belova took the bronze. Restzova's was the second gold for the Commonwealth of Independent States.

Holyfield is an unbeaten champion, but in his fights against Buster Douglas and Foreman, it was the opponent who was the major attraction. It would have been the same story if he had fought Tyson.

seconds, breaking his own meet record of 7.57 he set in 1986. Jack Pierce of the United States was second in 7.83 followed by Makoto Watanabe of Japan in 7.89

LONDON (AP) — Four of the world's top ten male tennis players have committed to the pre-Wimbledon grass-court event at Queen's Club, London, from June 8-14. American Pete Sampras, two-time Wimbledon champion Stefan Edberg from Sweden, Czech Ivan Lendl and Guy Forget from France will be

EAST ORANGE, New Jersey (R) — The International Boxing Association (IBF) has ordered a rematch between champion James Toney and Tiberi within 90 days due to the disparity of scoring. Saturday's middleweight fight between the two was a controversial 12-round split decision over Tiberi in Atlantic City. Saturday to retain his title. One judge scored the fight 115-111 for Toney and a second judge has it 115-112 for the champion. But the third judge had Tiberi winning easily, 117-111, an assessment the majority of the crowd seemed to agree with. "Under ordinary circumstances, we don't encourage rematches," IBF President Robert Lee said. "But we felt someone was short changed here because of the wide disparity in scoring on the part of the judges."

"Our fish never argue. I put money in their bowl to see if that changes anything."

Yesterday's Jumbles: EMPTY WAGER TIMING HOOKUP
 Answer: In springtime, a man's thoughts turn to a lot of garden chores he plans to do - - - WITHOUT

4 Certainly!	38 Touched ground	48 Post 8 A.M.	54 On t
5 Forty-niners	44 Drooped	49 Hodgepodge	56 Tak
6 Array	45 Prevaricator	50 Magazine name	57 Actr
		51 Cinch	58 —

West led the queen of clubs, covered by the king and taken by

MONEY, MONEY, MONEY! THAT'S ALL THE SWEET WOMAN THINKS ABOUT!

WHAT'S UP, MUTT?

MY WIFE IS WRITING ME FOR A CHECK AGAIN AND I'M ALMOST BROKE!

MAYBE SHE'D GO EASY ON YOU IF YOU SHOWED HER A LITTLE MORE AFFECTION ONCE IN A WHILE!

HEBBER VOURE RIGHT! I'VE GOT AN IDEA! I'LL SEND HER A CHECK MADE OUT FOR A THOUSAND KISSES!

THAT'S A GREAT IDEA! SHE'LL LIKE THAT!

TWO DAYS LATER, COMES ANOTHER LETTER FROM THE SWEET WOMAN

Dear Mut: Thanks for the check the million cashed it for me this morning

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Financial Markets
in co-operation with
Cairo Amman Bank

U.S. Dollar in International Markets

Currency	TOKYO 11/2/92	NEW YORK 11/2/92
Sterling Pound	1.8159	1.8185
Deutsche Mark	1.5753	1.5782
Swiss Franc	1.4165	1.4107
French Franc	5.3903	5.3785
Japanese Yen	126.93	126.78
European Currency Unit	1.2929	1.2956

USD Per STG
European Opening at 8:00 A.M. GMT

Eurocurrency Interest Rates

Currency	1 MTH	3 MTHS	6 MTHS	12 MTHS
U.S. Dollar	3.87	3.87	3.93	4.25
Sterling Pound	10.31	10.31	10.18	10.06
Deutsche Mark	9.43	9.43	9.44	9.25
Swiss Franc	7.13	7.12	7.06	7.00
French Franc	9.93	9.93	9.87	9.68
Japanese Yen	5.40	5.15	4.95	4.81
European Currency Unit	10.31	10.31	10.18	9.96

Interbank bid rates for amounts exceeding U.S. Dollars 1,000,000 or equivalent.

Precious Metals

Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm	Metal	USD/Oz	JD/Gm
Gold	355.40	6.75	Silver	4.78	0.09

Central Bank of Jordan Exchange Rate Bulletin

Currency	Bid	Offer
U.S. Dollar	0.675	0.677
Sterling Pound	1.2280	1.2351
Deutsche Mark	0.4279	0.430
Swiss Franc	0.4789	0.4813
French Franc	0.1256	0.1262
Japanese Yen	0.5324	0.5351
Dutch Guilder	0.380	0.3819
Swedish Krona	0.1177	0.1183
Italian Lira	0.0566	0.0571
Belgian Franc	0.02090	0.02100

Per 100

Other Currencies

Currency	Bid	Offer
Bahraini Dinar	1.7610	1.7700
Lebanese Lira	0.07600	0.07735
Saudi Riyal	0.1797	0.1810
Kuwaiti Dinar	---	---
Qatari Riyal	0.1829	0.1838
Egyptian Pound	0.2020	0.2160
Omani Riyal	1.7280	1.7360
UAE Dirham	0.1829	0.1838
Greek Drachma	0.3650	0.3760
Cypriot Pound	1.4900	1.5150

CAB Indices for Amman Financial Market

Index	8/2/92	Close	10/2/92	Close
All-Share	136.20		136.82	
Banking Sector	109.72		109.61	
Insurance Sector	132.14		133.10	
Industry Sector	175.50		177.20	
Services Sector	153.63		154.44	

December 31, 1990 - 100

LONDON EXCHANGE RATES

LONDON (R) — Following are the buying and selling rates for leading world currencies and gold against the dollar at midsession on the London foreign exchange and bullion markets Tuesday.

One Sterling	1.8037/47	U.S. dollars
One U.S. dollar	1.1808/13	Canadian dollar
	1.5890/00	Deutsche mark
	1.7900/10	Dutch guilder
	1.4235/45	Swiss franc
	32.75/79	Belgian franc
	5.4170/20	French franc
	1196/1197	Italian lire
	127.50/60	Japanese yen
	5.7750/7800	Swedish crowns
	6.2330/80	Norwegian crowns
	6.1620/70	Danish crowns
One ounce of gold	355.20/355.70	U.S. dollars

Albania to clamp down on food aid thieves

TIRANA (R) — Albania's caretaker government, struggling to feed a hungry population amid chronic food shortages, says it will clamp down on anyone stealing food aid from abroad.

More than 40 people have died since last November in a wave of looting by hungry Albanians on warehouses stocked with foreign donations of badly-needed basic food.

"All those who have stolen or looted foreign aid should be punished according to law," Ahmeti told a government meeting.

He did not give details of penalties in an apparent warning that thieves will be punished more severely in future.

Thirty-eight looters died in the northern town of Fushe Arrez in mid-December after a warehouse they were plundering caught fire from flaming torches they carried.

At least one civilian and one policeman died in an earlier riot in Lac, northeast of Tirana, in shooting between looters and police.

Albania, slowly emerging from four decades of Stalinist isolation, is suffering chronic shortages of basic foodstuffs, industrial equipment and medical supplies.

Industrial and agricultural production has ground to a halt in many towns. Fear of authority, rigidly imposed by the former communist regime, has been eroded by democratic change.

Ahmeti said large quantities of foreign aid were being held up for too long in warehouses or at ports because of bureaucratic sluggishness.

He called for improved supervision of distribution and the dismissal of incompetent officials.

Scandals saw many quit Japan brokerages last year

TOKYO (R) — Japan's scandal-plagued brokerage industry shrank by 10,000 workers last year, the first decline since 1979, the Japan Securities Dealers Association (JSDA) has said.

Employees at 267 brokerages, including 50 foreign brokers, totalled 156,558 at the end of 1991, down from 166,965 at the end of June 1991, and down from 158,601 at the end of 1990.

Many who left were salesmen upset by the flood of queries they received from customers about a spate of scandals involving brokerages' improper compensation of elite clients, securities industry sources said.

The drop was especially sharp in the latter half of 1991, after a series of compensation scandals rocked the securities industry, industry sources said.

Shrinking employee bonuses and commissions after a prolonged slump in stock prices slashed company earnings also prompted many to quit, they said.

Still others were let go or retired early as part of brokerages' cost-cutting plans.

"Many brokerages are struggling to cut costs," one industry source said.

Kohl asks Germans to accept modest pay raises this year

FRANKFURT (R) — Chancellor Helmut Kohl has urged German labour unions to accept modest pay increases this year, saying the country should not live beyond its means.

Addressing a meeting of his Christian Democratic Union (CDU) party, Mr. Kohl said demands for a 9.5 per cent pay rise by the three million strong German public sector union OETV were unacceptable.

"That — what is being demanded — is completely unacceptable because it does not correspond with the reality of the country," Mr. Kohl told the meeting in Schleswig-Holstein.

"I am not prepared to represent a policy in which we live beyond our means. I see a personal responsibility in this question," he pointed out.

Germany's 1992 public sector wage talks began Friday in Stuttgart. But they ended without any result, and negotiations will resume Feb. 21.

Government negotiators, insisting the 1992 accord be below last year's six per cent rise, are bracing for a tough fight.

A settlement last week in the steel sector, where workers won a 6.4 per cent wage rise just before a threatened strike was due to

begin, will make their position more difficult.

The steel pact was the end of the 1991 round, but economists and the Bundesbank, Germany's central bank, are concerned it could be used as the benchmark for the public sector.

Economists, noting growth in Germany is cooling off sharply under the weight of record high interest rates and the global slowdown, say the entire 1992 wage round may hinge on the outcome of the public sector wage negotiations.

They said moderate deals are essential if Germany is to maintain economic stability and possibly allow the Bundesbank breathing space to lower interest rates later this year.

"There is very little room to manoeuvre," said Commerzbank economist Peter Pietsch. "Reasonable wage settlements are absolutely necessary. Wage increases of under five per cent would be highly desirable."

Mr. Kohl, referring to European Community integration, said it was important Germany "become fit for the future."

He said a reduction in work weeks and lowering the threshold for retirement was "the wrong way to go."

Djibouti premier seeks aid from wealthy Arabs

ABU DHABI (R) — The prime minister of Djibouti said Tuesday his small, impoverished country in the Horn of Africa was seeking urgent aid from wealthy Gulf Arab states to cope with a flood of Somali refugees.

"Civil wars in the Horn of Africa have caused (us) insurmountable burdens," Barkat Gourat Hamadou told Reuters in a telephone interview.

Mr. Hamadou, who arrived in Abu Dhabi Monday after visits to Saudi Arabia and Kuwait, said his country, a member of the Arab League, did not have the means to feed and settle the growing number of Somali refugees who were living in ghastly conditions.

"With rampant inflation and very high unemployment, Djibouti is unable to cope with the... refugees," he said.

Officials travelling with the prime minister said the number had reached over 90,000 and was rising as a result of the civil war in Somalia.

Mr. Hamadou, who was flying back home Wednesday, said he discussed the situation in his country with Gulf leaders and they said they were ready to help Djibouti.

The prime minister said Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and the United Arab Emirates had been generous in their aid to the former French colony since it became independent in 1977.

Russians face chronic shortages of equipment

MOSCOW (R) — Russian farmers face a dire shortage of equipment ahead of spring sowing this year, a senior agriculture ministry official said Monday.

ITAR-TASS news agency quoted Vyacheslav Gritysk, head of the ministry's farm equipment division, as saying 200,000 tractors might not be delivered as a result of a breakdown last year in the state-organised supply system.

"Only 20 per cent of (farm machinery supply) contracts have been concluded. Thirty three enterprises, including such giants as the Altai tractor and spare parts factory, are simply refusing to sign them," he said.

"Managers of enterprises producing farm equipment explain their refusal by the lack of metal needed for producing spare parts," he said.

Machinery shortages, combined with a poor storage and distribution system, are largely to blame for inadequate food supplies in Russia and other former Soviet republics.

Mr. Gritysk said farmers were using antiquated machinery and needed 430,000 new tractors for the new planting season.

"If you take into account the problem with fuel supplies, which is the same every year, and the shortage of mechanics, then this spring could be simply unpredictable for those working on the land," he said.

TASS said the high price of farm machinery could also hit this year's crops. A combine harvester costs 1.5 million roubles (\$13,000 at the Russian central bank's market exchange rate), it said.

Many inefficient state and collective farms in Russia are already experiencing acute financial difficulties after years of depending on government subsidies. Russia has warned that loss-making farms will be broken up and privatised.

Russia's Trade Minister Stanislav Anisimov told a news conference Monday that the country was short of fodder and supplies of imported grain were not proceeding well. But he gave no details.

Governor of Bank of Israel digs in economic escape angle to guarantees political wrangle



Jacob Frenkel

TEL AVIV (R) — While the politicians argue over the political strings to attach to U.S. loan guarantees for Israel, the head of Israel's central bank has seized on the U.S. demand for economic conditions — to ensure Israel can repay — as a means to promote economic liberalisation.

Jacob Frenkel, governor of the Bank of Israel, told Reuters he welcomed the decision to set up a joint U.S.-Israeli committee which will set the economic terms and draft guidelines for reforms to Israel's centrally controlled economy.

"The purpose is to identify, articulate and formulate areas in which economic reforms in Israel and policies can be pursued to raise efficiency in the economy," he said.

"We want to deepen these economic reforms... whatever mechanism brings about greater commitment we would welcome," said Mr. Frenkel, an advocate of free markets and former head of research for the International Monetary Fund.

His attitude to a U.S. say in the Israeli economy contrasts sharply with the attitude of his political masters to U.S. attempts to make the guarantees conditional on Israel ending Jewish settlement in the occupied territories.

Justice Minister Dan Meridor said Saturday that linking the loan guarantees and the settlements could set a dangerous precedent for future aid requests.

And Health Minister Ehud Olmert accused U.S. President George Bush Monday of raising new demands to force Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir into rejecting terms for the guarantees.

The guarantees would enable Israel to borrow up to \$10 billion at preferential rates to house and find jobs for a wave of Jewish immigrants, mostly from Russia, that could swell its population by 20 per cent by the mid-1990s.

Critics have accused Israel's political establishment of blocking reforms essential to opening its market and attracting investors. Israel needs to double investment in the next 10 years to absorb the immigrants, they say.

Mr. Frenkel, who is about to

arrive by the mid-1990s, Israel's population will grow an average of five per cent a year compared with 1.7 per cent in the 1980s.

Almost 400,000 immigrants from the Soviet Union have arrived since the exodus began in 1989 but recent months have seen a sharp fall in arrivals.

Unemployment is at a two-decade high of 11 per cent, with the rate among the well-educated newcomers from the former Soviet Union topping 50 per cent in some areas.

Inflation was 18.5 per cent in 1991 and real wages fell about one per cent. Gross domestic product per capita fell one per cent last year while exports fell two per cent.

U.S. officials share Mr. Frenkel's concerns about the long-term prospects for the Israeli economy.

Secretary of State James Baker, testifying to a House of Representatives committee Thursday, said "the likelihood of repayment" was a factor in his negotiations with Israel.

He acknowledged that Israel had always repaid its loans on time but that was so "because we appropriate the money up here with which to repay ourselves."

Some reforms have been taken. Late last year the central bank announced steps to liberalise capital markets and foreign exchange by removing some restrictions on deposits and capital transfers.

But other free market measures such as privatising state-owned firms, reducing inflation and cutting labour costs are lagging behind the stated government intentions.

The state owns about 160 companies, including the main utilities, aircraft and military industries and the national airline El Al. A plan to sell major banks has not materialised.

Mr. Frenkel said the joint committee would lay foundations for interest and principal payments.

"It's very sensible for anyone taking a financial liability to show interest in how funds are used and even more importantly in the capacity of the borrower to repay," the governor added.

New Greek central bank head faces tough task at critical time

ATHENS (R) — Efthymios Christodoulou, who won a reputation as a tough and uncompromising boss at the national economy ministry since 1990, was named Monday to run Greece's central bank in a crucial period for national monetary policy.

He will take over the Bank of Greece with liberalisation of the state-dominated banking system being forced ahead by European Community (EC) directives and the drachma expected to join the EC's exchange rate mechanism (ERM) of currency management at some point next year.

Financial analysts said Mr. Christodoulou, 60, who was appointed central bank chief by Prime Minister Constantine Mitsotakis, must fight Greece's double-digit inflation to get the drachma into the ERM.

Mr. Christodoulou himself told Reuters recently that the drachma should join the ERM as early as possible in 1993, even if the shattered economy is not entirely ready for such a move.

He expressed concern that failure to put the drachma in the ERM risked relegating Greece to second class status within the Community.

Greece and Portugal are the only EC states outside the ERM, which links most EC currencies and is seen as the testing ground for Community plans for a single currency for some states before the end of the century.

Mr. Christodoulou has been a tough enforcer of an austerity plan imposed after the conservatives won a general election in April 1990. He has zero pay rises to state workers for this year.

But despite such moves, inflation has stayed high — year-on-year rate of 18.1 per cent was recorded in January, compared with 22.1 per cent 12 months earlier.

That is a long way from the EC average of four to five per cent and nowhere near striking distance for joining the ERM and keeping pace with EC plans for economic and monetary union.

Mr. Christodoulou inherits a further expenditure cuts, and from higher than anticipated revenue from the sale of Philippine Airlines.

Under the austerity programme, high interest rates are now falling and inflation is being brought under control. From a high of 19 per cent last September it is now under 10 per cent.

The Philippine economy, battered by a series of natural disasters and the impact of the Gulf crisis, recorded zero growth in 1991, but is expected to bounce back to around 3.0 per cent growth in real GNP this year.

He replaces Dimitris Halikias, a hold-over from the 1981-89 socialist government and an internationally recognised economist with 35 years at the central bank, eight as governor. Mr. Halikias's term expires Feb. 18.

Philippines gets IMF seal of approval

MANILA (R) — The International Monetary Fund (IMF), after seven months of negotiations, has approved the latest Philippine austerity programme, clearing the way for Manila to resume borrowing from the IMF, officials said Tuesday.

IMF Resident Representative Christopher Brown said the IMF's Managing Director Michel Camdessus approved the programme Monday. It still must be approved by the IMF board later in the month, but this is normally a formality.

"Yes, we have the approval," Mr. Brown told Reuters.

The IMF's seal of approval allows the Philippines to go ahead with its proposal to restructure \$5.3 billion of commercial bank debt. The country has total external debts of \$29 billion.

Central bank governor Jose Cuisia will be in New York Feb. 18-19 for talks with the commercial banks on the debt restructuring package, officials said.

The IMF had suspended lending to the Philippines last July after Manila failed to meet several monetary and fiscal targets

agreed with the fund in return for a \$900 million stand-by arrangement to bail out the country from an economic crisis.

Protracted negotiations were wrapped up in January, with the Philippines agreeing to a consolidated public sector deficit of 2.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP), and President Corason Aquino's government imposing tough spending cuts.

But resumed lending to Manila was contingent on the Philippine senate approving new revenue measures, and the deficit-ridden National Power Corp. putting up electricity prices by 15 per cent, both unpopular moves in the run-up to May presidential elections.

The second tier of the power increases went into effect this month but the Philippine senate had failed to pass all the tax measures requested by the IMF.

Finance Secretary Jesus Estanislao said, however, that the senate had approved seven of nine tax measures pushed by the government, and this was enough to persuade the IMF that the political will for reform was

there.

The approval unblocks \$100 million in IMF loans in the pipeline. But the real importance is the impact on others, such as the commercial banks and major donors, awaiting the IMF's nod.

IMF approval will allow a meeting of major aid donors grouped in the Philippine assistance programme to go ahead in Hong Kong in March, as well as the rescheduling of more official debt under the Paris Club, Mr. Brown said.

He said that to keep the deficit within target, the government would close the financing gap by

further expenditure cuts, and from higher than anticipated revenue from the sale of Philippine Airlines.

Under the austerity programme, high interest rates are now falling and inflation is being brought under control. From a high of 19 per cent last September it is now under 10 per cent.

The Philippine economy, battered by a series of natural disasters and the impact of the Gulf crisis, recorded zero growth in 1991, but is expected to bounce back to around 3.0 per cent growth in real GNP this year.

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in
Ya Mahallabia Ya

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Patrick Swayze
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ROADHOUSE
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in
Naji Al Ali
Arabic
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Jolly in 12/2

More aid arrives in CIS

MOSCOW (R) — Muscovites relished their first taste of American food Tuesday, tucking into pork chops, canned corn and vanilla pudding as Western planes carrying more aid supplies landed in republics of the former Soviet Union.

The airlift is part of "Operation Provide Hope," which will fly 18,000 tonnes of food, medicines and other supplies to about 20 cities in the new Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS).

"I am thankful with all my heart," said Maria Dodporina, 64, eating from a small tin of vanilla pudding at a canteen in southern Moscow.

"I think the food in America is definitely better than it is here," said Mr. Dodporina, an invalid who is accustomed to a modest lunch of soup and brown bread.

The canteen is one of 19 in Moscow designated to serve hundreds of thousands of hot meals to invalids, the poor and elderly as part of the airlift that began Monday.

The airlift, plus a government request for an extra \$645 million in aid, followed criticism that Washington's support for economic reforms in the Commonwealth paled beside that offered

by Europe.

While elderly Muscovites ate their lunch, volunteer workers dressed in neatly-pressed blue uniforms sang American folk songs.

"I am so happy to see all these smiling faces," Ms. Dodporina said. "Usually, when we eat in a public place we have to deal with hostile people who are not interested in smiling or helping us."

European countries are also taking part in the aid airlift.

Cargo planes from Germany, Canada, France, Italy, Spain and Portugal flew to former Soviet republics Monday and aircraft from Britain and Greece were scheduled to take off later this week, officials said.

Denmark said Tuesday it was setting up a Baltic supply line to provide 27,000 babies in St. Petersburg with milk powder.

A Japanese naval ship landed in the Far East port of Vladivostok Tuesday, carrying food and consumer goods, said the ITAR-TASS News Agency.

Response to the aid has been generally favourable. A reader on Russia's afternoon news said the republic needed aid to prevent chaos.

"Many things in the Commonwealth depend on foreign relief, namely the implementations of economic reforms and political stability," the newsreader said.

Commonwealth and Western officials acknowledged the airlift was mainly symbolic since much larger quantities of aid could have been sent by land and sea.

"Even in places where American help is guaranteed, it's no good counting on a noticeable improvement in food or medical supplies, since the amount being delivered is tiny," the newspaper Izvestia said Monday.

The operation is an ironic reminder of the Berlin airlift after World War II, when the Western allies flew millions of tonnes of food and supplies to the city during a Soviet blockade.

U.S. publicity over the emergency aid airlift to the former Soviet Union has drowned out Bonn's far greater and more long-term help to its one-time enemy, German newspapers complained Tuesday.

"Monday at Rhein-Main Airport in Frankfurt was nothing more than cheap showmanship," Berlin's Tagesspiegel Daily said about the start of the U.S.-

launched operation.

"It overlooked the fact that planes have been bringing aid from Germany to Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth republics since November 1990," the daily pointed out.

"The help the U.S. has to contribute goes far beyond what they're cheering about now," the Frankfurter Rundschau said.

Germany, the largest aid donor to the former Soviet Union, has officially taken a positive stand on the airlift, praising it as a sign of international solidarity.

Newspapers also lauded the aid as crucial humanitarian help.

But officials made clear Bonn, which sent seven planes from Frankfurt Monday with far less publicity, had already done much more before the Americans launched their airlift.

"Our first plane out Monday was our 302nd flight," a Foreign Ministry spokesman said. "For us, this operation is open-ended. It will go on as long as it is needed."

With great fanfare, the United States dispatched five C-5 Galaxy cargo planes from Frankfurt to the former Soviet Union Monday while seven others left from Turkey for Central Asia.

Kravchuk takes aim at Russian 'imperialism'

MOSCOW (R) — Ukraine warned its giant neighbour Russia Tuesday against "imperial" policies to settle feuds dividing the old Soviet Union's two main Slav states.

Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk staked out a hard line ahead of a Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) summit Friday.

He declared that his republic's sovereignty must come before unity in the group of 11 former Soviet republics.

Mr. Kravchuk told the former Communist Party daily Pravda Tuesday running disputes with Russia over the Black Sea Fleet and the Crimea threatened the future of the Commonwealth.

He said Ukraine would never submit to a "Diktat" by Russia, issued under the cover of joint Commonwealth policy.

"If there are any attempts within the framework of the Commonwealth to turn back the clock to imperial times, then the Commonwealth can have no prospects for the future."

"In accordance with the will of the people we are prepared to take any actions to resist transformation of the Commonwealth into a state structure" that could infringe Ukrainian sovereignty, Mr. Kravchuk said.

The Ukrainian president, a Communist ideologue turned ardent nationalist, also took aim at what he called Moscow's claim to first-among-equals status, replacing fallen Soviet power with Russian rule.

"It seems that there is only one republic among us that has all the rights — the right to the entire fleet, the entire armed forces to all the embassies and consulates. And all the others are deprived of this right."

"We cannot agree to this and we never will." His bitter comments reflect frustration after Russian dominance over Ukraine dating back hundreds of years and underscore the cultural and political fragility of the Commonwealth without Soviet central control.

In a bow to personal diplomacy, however, Mr. Kravchuk sought to exempt Boris Yeltsin from direct criticism, suggesting instead it was the Russian leader's "circle" that backed a perceived anti-Ukrainian line coming from Moscow.

Mr. Kravchuk said relations between the two leaders — the most influential of Commonwealth presidents — were good, nurtured by once-a-week telephone conversations and other contacts.

Mr. Yeltsin has suggested a face-to-face summit with Mr. Kravchuk for Feb. 15, one day after the 11 Commonwealth leaders meet for a summit in the Belarusian capital Minsk. The Ukrainian has yet to reply.

Yugoslav truce under strain after clashes kill 4

BELGRADE (R) — Three Serb irregulars and one Croatian Guardsman were killed in the biggest outbreak of fighting in Yugoslavia since a U.N.-brokered ceasefire began five weeks ago, Croatian and Belgrade media said Tuesday.

The clashes in eastern Croatia Monday night added strain on the truce negotiated by United Nations special envoy Cyrus Vance on Jan. 3 between Croatian militias and Serb forces backed by the Yugoslav army.

Belgrade-based Tanjug News Agency said three Serb irregulars were killed and two others wounded in an attack by Croatian forces in a Serb-controlled region of eastern Croatia.

Tanjung quoted Rade Leskovac, deputy information minister of the Serb-dominated Croatian region of Slavonija, Baranja, and Western Srem, as saying Croatian National Guardsmen opened fire around villages in an area near Vinkovci and Vukovar.

"This is the biggest attack mounted by Croatian forces in the area since the signing of the 15th ceasefire," he said.

Croatian radio said one Croatian guardsman died and two were injured when Serb irregulars launched an artillery attack in the same area.

Croatian commanders said it was the fiercest assault by Serb-led forces since ceasefire began. They said mortars were also fired in and around Vinkovci but Croatia said no one was hurt.

Tanjung also reported gunfire in the port of Dubrovnik on the Adriatic coast and said one Yugoslav federal soldier suffered gunshot wounds in the village of Gorja Trnava near the Belgrade-Zagreb Motorway in central Croatia.

Many Yugoslavs consider the U.N. plan the last hope of averting further bloodshed in a seven-month conflict which has killed 6,000 people. They believe violations could increase with the onset of warmer weather.

U.N. officials said last week the ceasefire was secure enough for the deployment of 10,000 peacekeepers — one of the conditions for a U.N. peace plan to be put into effect.

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Reynolds elected new Irish premier

DUBLIN (R) — Albert Reynolds was formally elected Tuesday as Irish prime minister to replace Charles Haughey, who resigned after becoming embroiled in a 10-year-old telephone tapping scandal that returned to haunt him.

Mr. Reynolds, sacked as finance minister last November by Mr. Haughey after leading a failed party mutiny, won a parliamentary vote by 84-78, closing a tempestuous era in Irish politics.

The rebel, who returned from the political wilderness to win a leadership contest last week in the ruling Fianna Fail (Soldiers of

Destiny), is expected to make major cabinet changes to revive the flagging coalition government.

With Fianna Fail's popularity at an all-time low, Mr. Reynolds takes power with unemployment at a record high and Northern Ireland plunged into a bloody new round of sectarian killings.

Mr. Haughey, who survived a string of financial scandals and leadership challenges in his career, stepped down after his former justice minister said Mr. Haughey knew about the tapping of journalists' phones in 1982.

The Progressive Democrats, the

small party that shores up the coalition, said Mr. Haughey must go or it would propel Ireland into its fifth general election in 10 years.

Mr. Reynolds, whose business career ranged from owning ballrooms in the 1960s to running his own pet food factory, was once dubbed "the singing cowboy" for dressing up in full cowboy regalia to sing a country and western song on television.

During Mr. Reynolds' two years as finance minister, Ireland enjoyed an economic boom which rapidly ended with the Gulf war.

Bomb scare disrupts central London

LONDON (R) — Suspected Irish guerrilla bombs closed the heart of London Tuesday just hours before a visit by U.S. Vice President Dan Quayle and security talks on Northern Ireland chaired by British Prime Minister John Major.

Police said they had deactivated and removed a device found in a telephone booth in Whitehall.

"The bomb might have gone off," Home Secretary (Interior Minister) Kenneth Baker said on television.

The device was found barely 100 metres from 10 Downing Street, the residence and office of British prime ministers. But Mr. Major, at his office as usual, insisted that it would not interfere with Tuesday's Irish talks.

A bomb squad was also called to the Welsh office where another suspect package, which was later found harmless, was spotted.

Police said they had received telephoned warnings that included a code. The Irish Republican Army (IRA), which is fighting to oust Britain from Northern Ireland, uses special codes to authenticate its warnings.

Mr. Quayle was not in Whitehall at the time of the bomb scare but he was due to go to the Foreign Office, partially evacuated, in the afternoon and would later dine with Mr. Major.

Walesa: West made mistakes in dealing with Poland

WARSAW (AP) — President Lech Walesa said Monday that the West should do more for the new nations emerging from the former Soviet Union than it has done for Poland.

"We counted too much on the West," he said in an interview. Mr. Walesa has mainly criticised Europe for a lack of action. Last week, in a speech to the Council of Europe, he accused the West of "making good business" out of Poland's revolution, while giving little back in terms of investment.

On Monday he said those comments were meant only as "a warning" so that Western countries do not repeat the pattern in their treatment of the former Soviet republics. That, he said, could bring a retreat from democracy or even violence.

He also stressed that he had been addressing Europe. "We don't have much to complain about" concerning the United States, he said.

According to Mr. Walesa, Western Europe is guilty of flooding Poland with goods while doing little to help modernise factories and create employment — steps that would bring long-term political and social stability.

He said Poland might be a bad investment in the short term, but good for the long run — and the same lesson should apply in the former Soviet Union.

TOKYO (R) — A lone gunman forced his way into the headquarters of Japan's scandal-plagued ruling party and demanded that it give up power but surrendered later Tuesday, police said.

The young man, carrying a sword and wearing a headband and sash emblazoned with the nationalist rising sun emblem, was bundled into a police van outside the building in central Tokyo.

Police later said he had been formally arrested, charged with carrying weapons. They said other charges might follow.

The seven-hour drama began shortly before nine a.m. when the man, identified as extreme rightist sympathiser Osamu Aihara, fired a shot at the entrance door of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) head office, breaking a window pane.

He then walked up to the fourth floor and occupied the room reserved for party President Kiichi Miyazawa, the prime minister. Tuesday was a national holiday in Japan and neither Mr. Miyazawa nor other top party officials were in the building.

Police later joined Aihara in the room and tried to persuade him to surrender but he was "very nervous and pensive", making progress difficult, a policeman said.

Police speculated that he finally gave himself up because he was tired and saw no other course of action.

Outside the white 100-storey LDP building, about 100 metres from parliament, the street swarmed with blue-helmeted riot police and patrol cars. Grey riot trucks blocked access.

The man had taken no hostages and no one was hurt. He spread a little kerosene around in the room but did not try to light it, a policeman said.

Branding his pistol and the long Japanese sword, Aihara had demanded to see leaders of the conservative, pro-business LDP, which has ruled Japan in unbroken power since 1955.

He later abandoned this demand but stuck to four others — disband the LDP, embroiled in the latest in a series of political funding scandals; back four islands off northern Japan now ruled by Russia; fight against communism and reform the education system to bring it back to its patriotic past.

Using the comforts of the incumbency to the fullest, Mr. Bush will then board a helicopter and fly off to New Hampshire for a whirlwind day of campaigning.

New Hampshire's primary is the first presidential test of the year, and Mr. Bush faces an unexpectedly tough challenge in the economically ailing state from Mr. Buchanan.

It is generally agreed Mr. Bush must hand Mr. Buchanan a sharp rebuke in New Hampshire to enable him to turn his attention to the Democratic rivals.

U.S. Vice-President Dan Quayle said Monday he would be President Bush's running mate in the November presidential election.

"I will be his running mate... you can count on it," Mr. Quayle, on a two-day visit to Britain, said in a television interview.

There had been some doubt whether Mr. Bush would choose Mr. Quayle for a second term.

Tsongas leads Clinton as Harkin sweeps Iowa voting

DES MOINES, Iowa (R) — Arkansas Governor Bill Clinton, hit by twin rows over extramarital sex and military service, slumped to third place among Democratic Party presidential contenders in Iowa.

Senator Tom Harkin, one of five major Democratic contenders, won the strong showing he wanted in his home state Monday, focusing attention on the second-placed candidate.

Former Massachusetts Senator Paul Tsongas, a fast-rising challenger, was a surprise runner-up — edging out pacesetter Clinton in the first voting test of the 1992 U.S. presidential campaign.

Mr. Clinton's front-runner status in the polls has been damaged by rows over whether he had an affair with former nightclub singer Gennifer Flowers or avoided the draft during the Vietnam war — charges he has denied.

The focus now turns to politically more significant New Hampshire in Feb. 18, with higher stakes in the White House race.

Sen. Harkin swept to victory in the Iowa precinct caucuses with

an estimated 77 per cent of the vote while Tsongas has picked up national voter support and is now running even with Mr. Clinton, according to a new poll earlier this week conducted for the Boston Globe newspaper and a Boston television station.

Clinton's support eroded between Thursday and Sunday as he was forced to answer charges that he avoided the draft.

With 69 per cent of Iowa's 2,189 precincts reporting, Mr. Tsongas won 4.2 per cent of the vote to Mr. Clinton's 2.9 per cent. Nebraska Senator Bob Kerrey finished fourth with two per cent and former California Governor Jerry Brown ran fifth with 1.5 per cent.

Nearly 12 per cent remained uncommitted and the remainder supported other minor candidates. Turnout was low, estimated at 30,000 to 35,000 compared to 120,000 in 1988.

Even at their best, the caucuses — in which Democrats gather informally in living rooms, town halls and churches to express their presidential preference — are a poor predictor of presiden-

tial success.

In New Hampshire, on the other hand, where voter participation is far wider and by secret ballot, no one has been elected president since 1952 who did not first win there, on either the Republican or Democratic ballot.

Sen. Harkin's strong victory margin in Iowa was expected as his Democratic rivals had ignored or mounted only token campaigns in the state.

Most analysts expect the liberal Sen. Harkin to do poorly in New Hampshire and predict Mr. Tsongas, Mr. Clinton and perhaps Sen. Kerrey to place in the top positions and go on to slug it out in state primary and caucus voting.

From now until March 17, 28 states will hold presidential preference contests aimed at selecting delegates to Republican and Democratic nominating conventions to be held this summer.

The two parties' presidential nominees will then face each other in the Nov. 3 general election.

On the Republican side, incumbent President George Bush

Gunman invades Japan ruling party HQ, surrenders

TOKYO (R) — A lone gunman forced his way into the headquarters of Japan's scandal-plagued ruling party and demanded that it give up power but surrendered later Tuesday, police said.

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Mike Tyson

Tyson convicted of rape

INDIANAPOLIS, Indiana (R) — Mike Tyson, who became the youngest world heavyweight boxing champion in history, faces jail for raping a beauty queen — and an end of his ring career.

The rape conviction virtually dooms any prospect of a boxing comeback, although his lawyers plan an appeal in a bid to avoid a sentence of several years jail.

The trial prosecutor implied that the guilty verdict sent a warning message about the rampant libidos of some U.S. sports stars.

Tyson, who rose from a New York ghetto to take the title at 20, was convicted of one charge of rape and two of deviate conduct, charges carrying a possible sentence of 60 years.

If the fighter's expected appeal is unsuccessful, he is likely to get six to 10 years as a first offender and with good behaviour would probably serve half that time.

Judge Patricia Gifford will hold a pre-sentencing hearing on March 6 when character witnesses are likely to plead for leniency towards the fighter.

The jury of eight men and four women took just over nine hours to reach their verdict.

The 25-year-old former champion, free on \$30,000 bond pending the expected appeal, is to appear in court Tuesday for a probation hearing. The judge confiscated his passport.

The 18-year-old victim, in Indianapolis to compete in the Miss Black America Pageant, testified she was lured into Tyson's hotel room on July 19 and raped. She said Tyson pinned her to the bed and laughed, causing her "excruciating pain." Her claims were backed by physical evidence introduced at the 13-day trial.

Victorious prosecutor Greg Garrison implied that the verdict sent a message regarding the behaviour of sports stars.

"We have seen so many times that it doesn't matter what a superstar does, it's okay. This one time this behaviour was not tolerated — at least not in this country, at this time," he apparently referred to recent stories of the sexual activities of U.S. sports stars.

"We're not popping any champagne corks," he said, adding the victim "was a young person with

a lot of courage." The woman was not in the courtroom when the verdict was announced.

"There are two lives that have been irrevocably changed here and to some extent marked forever," Ms. Garrison added. "So I'm not sorry for him because he did what he did, and to that extent he asked for it. But I have compassion on him and I hope there's a better day out there for him."

Tyson's attempt to regain his title, lost exactly two years ago in Tokyo to James "Buster" Douglas, is probably over. No major promoter or cable television network or casino was judged likely to stage a Tyson fight now that he is a convicted rapist.

Tyson would have fought in the richest fight ever against champion Evander Holyfield. The estimated \$100 million fight had been set for Nov. 8, but Tyson hurt his rib.

Holyfield, interviewed by Cable News Network (CNN), made clear he would not be prepared to fight a Tyson convicted of rape. "I don't think it's right for me to fight anybody who has been charged and guilty of such a crime," he said.

Even before the jury returned to Courtroom 4 of Marion